

CREATIVE METHODS OF
TEACHING THE TODDLERS

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By
ELSIE BEARDWOOD

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PREFACE

IN response to requests from mothers, and from others in charge of young children, I commenced private lessons during the war years, when I could manage to spare some of my limited leisure from Press work (which I was doing for St. Dunstan's), and from other commitments. These lessons were to teach some of my own methods of giving toddlers in the nursery their first start in education, and my aim has always been to do so, as far as possible, *creatively*. By this I mean, letting the children find they are actually helping to create first the very letters themselves, and then, by means of the "sound friends" of those letters, create the words they form. This system is continued with the numbers, and with the formation of the letters in cursive writing, as well as with the other lessons.

In the methods I have devised, I have sought to catch the imagination of little children in such a way as to imbue each otherwise lifeless factor of their first lessons with an individuality of its own, and so lift it out of its lifelessness in the eyes of the toddlers.

As a result of the interest which my original private lessons aroused, I learnt that many parents, Nannies, and others, are anxious to commence teaching very young children, but are often at a loss to know how to do so because they look upon it as a great responsibility, and not as something they can do just anyhow. People realise nowadays that

it is very important, with their first lessons to children, to create a real appetite for learning things, and to eliminate any feeling of boredom. In this respect I cannot possibly claim that my ideas compete with any of those excellent methods employed at the various schools for small children, but what I can claim is that they have been adopted by many people who have wished to initiate children into the mysteries of first lessons at home in their own nurseries, and that they have proved very successful.

Let me add that my methods were not in an experimental stage when I imparted them to parents, Nannies and others in charge of toddlers. I had adopted them many years ago with entirely happy results, my first little pupil being my own small son whom I taught in 1936. By means of my creative system he learned both to read and to write all the letters and numbers before his fourth birthday in the April of that year, and could tell the time by any clock or watch very soon afterwards. Later I showed my methods to other mothers, who found them very helpful, but it was not until their general success had been proved widely that I considered them sufficiently past the experimental stage to be given in the private lessons to parents for which I had been repeatedly asked. A few extracts from some of the letters I have received may help to show the happy results they have had.

Here are some remarks made by the mother of twin girls aged three-and-a-half at the time she wrote :—

“I am more than delighted, and I just cannot put it into words. Your methods are just the

perfect thing for little children. Yesterday we started the days of the week, more as a game. The children knew the order, and the different seasons, with the meanings, before tea-time. (No tax on their memories)."

The governess of a little girl, aged four, wrote —

"Your lessons have been most helpful to me. Mary is getting on well. She has made good progress with "The Time." She can now count up to anything correctly and can write all her figures well. She can also write a good proportion of the alphabet and can spell and write her own name unaided . . . Thank you many times over for the lessons you have sent me and the help they have been to me, and will be."

"It really is a very, *very* nice way you have of representing each letter with a sound-friend," wrote the mother of a two-year-old boy, who was studying my methods to give to her small son when he should be a little older. She then went on to say, "The idea of making it a game, too, is good and I'm sure would appeal to the most unwilling child . . . You do understand children, I'm sure."

Another mother wrote :—

"Your lessons are *most* interesting and I know they will be a tremendous help in teaching little Colin. You are certainly doing a very good work in helping people with their children's first lessons, and I feel embarrassed, though grateful, in accepting so much for so very little."

These extracts are, of course, taken from only a few of the letters received, but they are representative of the average results my methods have achieved.

The secret of success in dealing with children lies in having a deep understanding of them, and this can only be gained by those with a real love of little people. It is for them that I have written these pages, knowing that in our love for children we, as writer and reader, have with them one thing in common.

ELSIE BEARDWOOD.

Ayr,
Scotland.

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PRESENT DAY DEVELOPMENTS FROM INFLUENCES OF THE PAST

IN the many plans which are being made for post-war reconstruction, few subjects come under more discussion than that of education. Yet, strangely enough, the average man or woman who is so ready to voice an opinion on schools is very limited in his or her knowledge of the foundations of educational systems.

Many of the reforms which are now spoken of as modern are in reality founded on ideas which were advocated by pioneer educationists of various countries generations ago, even centuries ago. Old foundations have had their influence upon the prevailing structure of education, although it may be that modern thinkers have lost sight of some of the old ideals, even whilst retaining the structure itself.

Nursery Schools, which many people speak of as a product of the present century, were established in France in 1881 under the name of "Ecoles Maternelles." These schools were under two sections; one for little children between the tender ages of two and five years, and another for those between five and six years old, the aim being to provide the right environment in pre-school days, and especially in cases where the mothers were working during the daytime.

Included in the activities provided in these nursery schools in France of 1881 were singing,

marching, and simple calisthenic movements (as they would be called in English then), object lessons, and character training.

Nursery Schools did not develop in our own country until a very much later date. Indeed, it was not until the present century that any important steps were taken to establish them here for children between the ages of two and five years. There were, however, public crèches for babies before nursery schools, both in France, where the first one was established in 1844, and in England, where the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, who died in the spring of 1908, instituted the first in London.

As apart from the Nursery School, the Kindergarten has long been recognised as a valuable department of education. Here we have to thank the great German child-lover and educationist, Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel, for his pioneer work. His first Kindergarten was opened well over a hundred years ago, and after training teachers to carry out his principles in the teaching of little children by means of play and creative activities, he organised other Kindergartens. Froebel-trained teachers are now in great demand in Britain.

An older man than Froebel was the Swiss idealist, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, whose works are said to have greatly interested the German founder of Kindergartens.

Pestalozzi seems to have had a burning love for little children, especially for those who were poor, and his work amongst them and for them was as great in practice as in theory. Many of his ideals were the precursors of those held by some authori-

ties of to-day, but his zeal was so great that he put them into practice in a very personal way, taking into his own home, at one time, about twenty poor children, and, with his wife's help, substantiating his theories that the secret of real education was not in knowledge alone, but in learning to love and respect those around them, to acquire true self-respect, and to merit the respect of others. Pestalozzi started that experiment in 1774, at which time he lived in his own house on agricultural land, and was able to put into operation his theories and belief in a child's right to have country air and the beneficial influences of work on the land. Accordingly, he took these waifs, whom he sheltered, to work with him in the open air, at the same time teaching them many lessons by word of mouth. With this he combined manual lessons of various sorts, and so marked was the improvement in the children; physically, mentally, and spiritually, that many people became interested in the experiment, before it unfortunately came to an end through financial difficulties. Later, however, he took up other educational activities with equal devotion.

Looking at the Home Office Approved Schools of to-day, many of which I have personally visited, it does seem rather as if Pestalozzi had, in 1774, foreseen in an unpolished, perhaps amateur way, the value of such Institutions. Certain it is that Pestalozzi's ideals have still, after all these years, their acknowledged followers, for even since the recent War plans have been developed for the housing of war orphans of all nationalities on the Trogen Plateau, in a colony which is to bear the name of "Pestalozzi Village."

Still further back than Pestalozzi we had the foundations laid by Johann Amos Comenius of Moravia, who was born as long ago as 1592, and whose fame as a great educational pioneer has never died. He it was who brought out the first educational picture book for children. This was the still famous book entitled *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*. So highly was Comenius esteemed for his educational theories and work, that in 1641 he was asked by the English Parliament to come to England to help and advise in reforming our schools. His great Spirituality, combined with his scholastic works, particularly on the teaching of languages, deeply impressed many authorities.

It was during the lifetime of Comenius that the great English philosopher, John Locke, was born at Wrington, Somerset, the tercentenary of whose birth was celebrated in 1932. John Locke's famous books are still read by students of educational systems, particularly his "Thoughts on Education" of 1693. Although there is much in his views which is probably open to debate, it might well be said of the present day aims of State controlled education that they tend to place importance too much in opposite order from Locke's placing, whose idea of "first things first" may be said to have been virtue, wisdom, manners and knowledge.

In the writings of educationists of the past, including those of our great English poet and Inspector of Schools, Matthew Arnold, who died in 1888, we find much emphasis is laid on the value of training the senses by supplying objects for children to handle in conjunction with learning, and by encouraging creativeness

Coming to the present day, we are indebted to the Italian Doctor Maria Montessori for the system which has here arisen from the methods she devised and used with such success in her own country.

Perhaps less widely known is the pioneer work of the Misses Margaret and Rachel McMillan, whose influence has gone a long way towards the opening of School Clinics in London, and towards the opening of State Nursery Schools. It was, in fact, greatly due to the influence of their work at Deptford that our first State Nursery Schools were established, and also many nursery school teachers trained.

The recent war, unfortunately, interfered with many plans and attempts to make conditions happier for children. In the spring of 1939 it was decided that the following winter London should have at least eight more children's playgrounds floodlit than those which had been floodlit as an experiment the previous winter. For toddlers in some of the city schools the same year teachers, with a real understanding of the little people, improvised "seaside" conditions for playtime, painting backgrounds of seas and ships, and providing "real sand" for building castles. Then, of course, came the war and the wholesale evacuation of children to safer areas, and it was during this period, when many parents and Nannies were keeping their nurseries far away from the danger zones, that the subject of toddlers' lessons evoked their personal interest to a greater extent than before, and which seems to have now come to stay.

Educationists of the present have one thing in common with those of the past and that is, a real

love of little children. It does, nevertheless, seem that nowadays, with the great speeding up of all our activities and aims, there is a tendency to be in such a hurry to impart as much book knowledge to children as we possibly can that sometimes the importance of training their natural instinct of creativeness, and the still greater importance of spiritual development, is overlooked.

Encouragement in creative work, spontaneity and initiative, are of far greater value than an enforced acquisition of knowledge alone. Education, at the very least, should lead to the development of the highest capabilities of the individual and also the highest expression of his personality. A mass-production system may produce useful working models, but it minimizes the chances of bringing out anything very distinctive.

EACH CHILD'S LIFE IS ENTIRELY INDIVIDUAL, ALTHOUGH NOT INDEPENDENT, AND THAT INDIVIDUALITY SHOULD NEVER BE LOST SIGHT OF AND ALLOWED TO BE SUBMERGED. EDUCATION SHOULD DEVELOP EVERY CHILD'S CREATIVE POWERS, WHILST AT THE SAME TIME TRAINING HIM TO REALISE AND APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT HE IS DEPENDENT UPON OTHERS, AND THEY UPON HIM

To take an example—a child may be clever (perhaps exceptionally so) at, let us say, drawing. He should be strongly encouraged in this aptitude and allowed to realise that his drawings are fully appreciated and valued. He should also, however, be taught as much as possible, according to his age, about the manufacture of the materials upon which

he relies for drawing—the pencils, rubber, paper. In this way his individuality is developed, his originality encouraged, but at the same time he learns, as soon as he is old enough, to value the way in which we are all linked up and reliant upon one another. His drawings will thus lose nothing of their value, but to his natural pride of achievement will have been added an interest in the part others play. This principle applies equally, of course, to other subjects, such as sewing, writing, games, etc. The child should be encouraged to think of others who make accomplishment of any sort possible—the people who make the needles, cotton, etc., before sewing can be accomplished, the ink and pens, etc., necessary before writing can be achieved; balls, bats, and other accessories for the playing of games. Remembering these things tends to cultivate a healthy regard for our reliance on others, as well as a pride in our own work, and this attitude, in children should be one of our aims in education, developing mutual respect

Children should be trained to think for themselves as well as to give due consideration to the thoughts of others. There should be a blending of creative instincts with a necessary acquisition of knowledge. Education should lead to a blending of self-reliance with a sense of social responsibility. Therein lies its essence.

CREATIVE METHODS OF TEACHING THE TODDLERS

CHAPTER I

UTILITY METHODS OF TRAINING THE MEMORY

The majority of people's first idea of training the young child's memory used to be to commence by teaching him (or her) to recite the alphabet from A to Z. It was the proud boast of one young father whom I knew that each of his children had been able to say the alphabet right through from A, and then again backwards from Z, before they were four years old! This seemed to me a hollow achievement, as it must have necessitated considerable effort on the part of the children, and would not be useful to them to any extent for some time.

In modern schools the alphabet, in its older form, is no longer taught. Instead, a phonetic alphabet is taught, in which A, B, C, D, must sound to the uninitiated something like "abba-cadda," and so on to the end. The teaching of reading is said to follow much easier by this system than by the old-

fashioned methods, although controversy has arisen as to its effect on spelling.

However, in home teaching the effort of the child to memorise the alphabet could be better used for something which will be needed much earlier than will the consecutive position of the 26 letters. As, for example :—

Learning the 7 days of the week in correct order.

Learning the 4 seasons of the year in correct order.

Learning the right and left hand, and right and left foot.

Learning the colours.

Learning SHAPES, such as round, square, oval, oblong, etc.

In a later chapter I shall give, in full detail, my original method for teaching the 26 letters of the alphabet, but not in their consecutive order at first. A few short lessons, given with my creative system, teach the children to recognise all the letters and enable them to “make” them for themselves, each letter being identified with its own personal sounds.

For utility training of the memory I suggest the following lines, which I have composed to help children remember the days of the week :—

THE DAYS OF THE WEEK

BEST CLOTHES I WEAR ALWAYS ON SUNDAY,

(child sweeps both hands down own body, from shoulders to knees)

EV'RY WEEK THAT'S THE VERY FIRST DAY,
(holding forefinger up to denote "first")

THE DAY THAT COMES NEXT IS A MONDAY,

WHEN I GET ALL MY TOYS OUT TO PLAY,
(child encircles imaginary treasures with both
arms and hands)

AFTER THAT, THERE'S A TUESDAY . . . ER, WEN?
(puts finger to cheek, pondering, and knits
brows, then suddenly smiles)

NO, *Wednesday*, OF COURSE, THAT'S THE DAY,

THEN COMES THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, AND THEN

IT IS SATURDAY—CLAP HANDS, HURRAY !
(child claps hands several times).

- . This can be effectively taught as a short action
recitation, as also can the following one, which I
have composed for memorising the four seasons :—

THE SEASONS

THE WEE BABY BUDS OPEN OUT IN THE SPRING,
(opening hands, with finger-tips upwards, arms
bent at elbows)

IN SUMMER IT'S WARM AND THE BIRDS LIKE TO SING,
(looking upwards, pointing, as if to trees above)

IN AUTUMN THE LEAVES FLUTTER DOWN FROM THE
TREES,
(sweeping both hands from above head, grace-
fully downwards)

IN WINTER QUITE OFTEN THE PUDDLES ALL FREEZE.

(sliding one foot backwards and forwards on the floor).

Matthew Arnold, one of our finest educationists of the past, said in 1882, "People talk contemptuously of 'learning lines by heart'," but "if a child is brought, as he easily can be brought, *to throw* himself into a piece of poetry, an exercise of *CREATIVE ACTIVITY* has been set up in him . . ." So even sixty odd years ago one of our greatest thinkers and students of children recognised the value of "creative methods" in education, and also the value of poetry as a means of expressing personality.

In teaching children verses let them understand every word used. If a word that is new to their vocabulary is included, explain the meaning fully. When possible, as in *THE DAYS*, and *THE SEASONS*, encourage action in illustration of the words; it is a help to the memory if a child associates the different lines with certain actions, and it also helps to make the verses more full of meaning to them.

Learning colours and shapes can be developed into a nice game with the tinies during the daily walk, taking one colour and one shape at a time, and seeing who will notice first things of that particular colour or shape in the course of the outing. For instance, a red pillar-box will be quickly noticed, and so will a green field or lawn, a yellow dandelion, a blue motor-car, or a brown dog. If you choose one colour on one day and some other colour on another day, the children

will enjoy watching for objects of the chosen shade and seeing who will find them first.

Shapes are a little more difficult, but the wheels of motor-cars, etc., will provide round shapes, as will some of the grids in the ground, such as old-fashioned coal-grids. Oblongs and squares can often be found among window-panes or in the flag-stones on the pavements. Diamond shape may also occasionally be seen in window-panes, in the patterns of garden gates, or in the shaped flower-beds in gardens. If you are near the shops, oval objects may be found in their windows, such as meat dishes, oval trays, etc.

Looking for these shapes provides fun for the children, whilst teaching them something which will make a useful addition to their little fund of general knowledge. Unfortunately, however, apart from those I have already mentioned, most names of shapes are too long to be easily added to the vocabularies of very small children. For instance, although a triangle is quite simple to recognise, its name is difficult for toddlers, and it is a mistake to tax little people's brains with the learning of too many long words. Sometimes an unusually long word is included in a child's vocabulary quite naturally, but it is one he has learnt through association with an older person who uses that particular word frequently in ordinary conversation, and the child has copied it of his own free will, which is a very different matter from being required to learn it.

It is remarkable how limited many adult people are in their knowledge of shapes, such as heptagonal, pentagonal, etc., and it is, therefore, quite

a good thing to arouse in children an interest in the elementary shapes, so that when they are older they may want to add to their knowledge of same. Whilst they are very young, however, concentrate only on very easy ones with easy names.

CHAPTER II

LEARNING BLOCK CAPITALS CREATIVELY

As I have already emphasised, I consider from my own experience, which is considerable, that in teaching children of a tender age it is not advisable to commence by wanting them to commit to memory the twenty-six letters of the alphabet in phonetical order. This can be acquired later on, but the alphabetical order of letters is not needed until a child is old enough to require it for reference purposes. In the very early stages, therefore, it would seem a waste of brain-power to apply the memory to this purpose. If twenty-six consecutive places are to be memorised at this elementary stage it would be more useful for the very young child to be taught to count up to 26 in numbers, rather than to struggle with the alphabetical order of letters. The main thing at present is to learn the shapes, names and sounds of the letters, and this can be achieved with the minimum of strain on the child's memory, by a method in which the learning of alphabetical order is postponed.

For the method I am going to outline you will need a special equipment which can easily be made at home. The most simple material to use for the purpose, and one which will be sufficiently substantial, is coloured pasteboard used by printers for

concert tickets. Purchase a packet of unprinted tickets from your local printer, the size measuring four and a half inches by three. Gum them together into thicknesses of three, and when completely dry cut out the strips I am about to describe. Or, with a little more trouble, the strips can be cut from long garden labels of wood, using a small hacksaw for the purpose. Afterwards they can be coloured with water-paints, in various shades, and finished off with clear varnish. A still easier way to colour them, if made with the wooden garden labels, is to use coloured ink. Obtain four pots of ink—red, green, violet and blue—and four paint brushes, keeping one brush for each shade. This is a quick way of colouring wood, since it can be blotted dry with blotting paper.

You will also need some complete circles, and will find that rubber rings, such as are used as washers in the lids of jam jars, pickling jars, potted meat jars, etc., will do nicely for these. As they are rather thin and flimsy they are greatly improved by button-holing two of them together with coloured wools, after they have been cut to the right shapes. One more thing you will need is a linen button, on which you must paint a face and sew some woollen "hair."

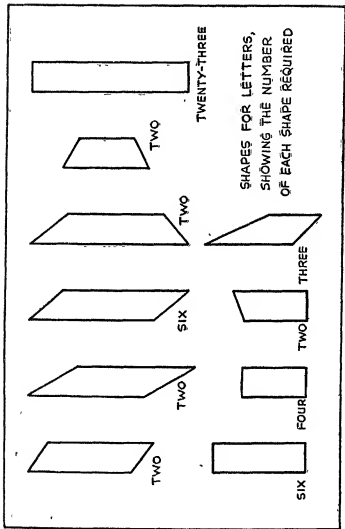
Now, having got your materials together, cut out fifty-two strips from your paste-board or wood, each strip being $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and about $\frac{1}{8}$ ths of an inch wide. Of these fifty-two strips, leave twenty-three unaltered. From the remainder, take six and cut them into lengths of not quite two inches each. Then take four more, and cut them into lengths of $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches each. Take the remaining pieces of $3\frac{1}{2}$

inches long (apart from the first twenty-three, which must be left unaltered), and cut them into various sizes, ranging from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long to $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, with the ends cut off to various degrees, as shown in the diagram. Some of these strips must be cut with both ends slanting in the same direction, and others with both ends slanting in opposite directions. Some must be cut further down the strip than others.

Next take your rubber circles; leave two of these uncut, one for the letter O and one for the letter Q. From the same-sized circles as these two letters, cut three half-circles, and then from smaller-sized washers cut eight more half-circles. The above are all in the single thicknesses, but if you are going to button-hole double thicknesses together you will, of course, need to prepare the double quantity of washers in the manner described.

When your outfit is complete you will have sufficient pieces for the child to build every letter in the alphabet, and you will find that he takes a real interest in doing this. Later on he will learn to build small words with the same equipment.

Before commencing to teach their names and shapes and sounds, explain that letters are very happy and busy little people, who work with their special "sound-friends" all day long, building the words we say and all the words which are written in books and newspapers. All the letters are friendly together, and work with each other to build up different words, with their "sound-friends" to help them. *Each letter takes a little sound-friend with it wherever it goes.*



Begin to teach the letters by building up all the straight-line ones from the letter "I." Teach the child the name and "sound-friend" of this letter, showing him, when he has learnt it, how to put another straight piece across the top of it, making it look like a one-legged table, which is the letter "T." He will soon know these two letters (I and T), and can be taught that when placed side by side, with the I first and the T after it, and their "sound-friends" helping them, they build the word "IT." The child will then feel that in learning letters he is really learning to make words.

Then make "I" again, and show the small child that if you give it a "foot" it will turn into the shape of the letter called "L." This can be built with one full-length straight piece of your equipment and one of the smaller pieces. Its "sound-friend" can then be learnt.

Go back to the letter "I" again, and your little pupil can be taught how it can be turned into the shape of a letter named "E" by giving it a "foot" like L, and then a "hand" at the top, which can reach the same length as the "foot," and another "hand" in the middle, which can only reach half the distance. Its different "sound-friends" should then be taught.

The letter "F" can next be shown. This is like "E," but without the "foot." The child will like describing its "sound-friend" to you, when you teach him what it is like, as it will remind him of the puffing of a train.

When these five letters and their various "sound-friends" have been learnt, and the letters have been built several times with the equipment, your pupil

will have had enough to remember for the first lesson.

The second day's lesson in letters should, of course, begin with a revision of the five letters and their "sound-friends" learnt yesterday. Then six new ones can be learnt, one by one, commencing with the letter "H." This can be shown to be two straight pieces standing upright, like two posts, with a straight piece across the middle for a "seat," on which a child could sit. Passing on from this letter, after learning about its rather amusing "sound-friend," it will be fun for the child to learn the letter A by pretending that the two upright "posts" supporting the "seat" have fallen inwards, with their tops touching each other. This makes the shape of A, which has several special little "sound-friends," such as the one in the word "AT" and the one in the word "HAY." As the child now knows the letter T, he can be allowed to build an "A" and a "T" and taught that if we put the letter A first and the T immediately after it we will have built the word "AT." You then come to the letter N, which is built by pretending that you have got the two posts upright again like they were for the letter "H," but have not managed to fix the seat across properly, so you have decided to leave it like that and it will be the letter "N," and if you put it immediately after the letter "A," instead of putting the letter T after A, you will have built the word AN. Let the toddler tell you several times what "sound-friends" T and N work with respectively.

After this you can teach the letter "M" by representing it to be a child's swing, with a narrow and

rather uncomfortable seat. Make a rough drawing for the child, and ask him to try to build the letter with equipment. Then let him learn what little "sound-friend" it carries with it into the words. He will like doing the M sounds.

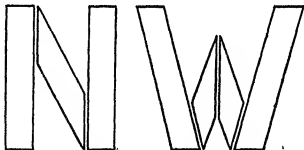
Then "V" is developed, by putting away the two side-posts of the swing and leaving only the narrow "seat." This letter is soon learnt, and Y can be developed from the V by adding a little straight "tail" to it

By this time the toddler will have learnt eleven out of the twenty-six letters, with their names and sounds, and the next day's lesson can dispose of the remainder of those which are made of straight lines only.

X is always a very easy one, and the easiest way to build it is with one long piece of the equipment and two short pieces. Z can be remembered as being "like an N which has fallen over and can't get up again!" The child's imagination can be stimulated by saying "Poor little Z, he's fallen on his head! He wanted to be like N, but he's fallen over and now he'll have to stay like that!" The sound is an easy one for little people to learn.

Then there is W. You can pretend to be very cross with W, because you know it is meant to be a "swing" like M, but it is naughty and won't have the seat put on the right way! M is a good little letter, with the seat of the swing hanging down. But naughty little W keeps the seat up in a point all the time so that nobody can sit on it!

The sound of "W," by the way, is misleading to children at first, as it naturally suggests the sound of "D." It is necessary, therefore, to accustom them



SHOWING HOW LETTERS
CAN EASILY BE BUILT UP
FROM THE VARIOUS SHAPES

to associate the letter with the right sound at once : let the small child learn that "W" takes its little "sound-friend" along to start building the words "Warm, Walk, Winter, Water, Wave," and other words which you can ask him to suggest when he has fully grasped the right idea.

Having reached this stage, the only straight-line letter left is K, and this is often rather a difficult one for the tinies to remember in shape, so I have taught it by saying it is like a bird with very long wings, trying to post a letter in the middle of a pillar-box. Make a drawing for the toddler, and let him make the shape with the wooden pieces.

The next three letters to be taught are composed of circles and curves.

Take the plain O first, the shape of which can easily be associated by the child with its sound, if you tell him to make a round O with his lips and say "Oh." Q can be taught by saying it is "an O with his thumb in his mouth." You must also teach the child that "Q" is a funny little letter who won't take its "sound-friend" into any word at all unless its other friend, the letter U, goes with it and stands immediately after it. Teach him the shape of U, and tell him that the letter U often helps to build words without the letter Q, and doesn't mind at all; but the letter Q will not help to build any words at all unless it is followed by U. Q is a very shy letter, and has to have U with it in every word it helps to build. By the way, to build the letter U, use one of the small half-circles and two of the smaller-sized straight strips.

There are now only eight more letters to be learnt and some fun may be had over these. "D" is an

"I" which was standing still when an O bumped into it. Part of the O got broken off, and the rest of the O got fastened right on to the I and made it look rather like the handle of a cup. It stayed like that and was called "D." The "sound-friend" of D can be learnt and is a nice easy one.

"B" is another "I" that was standing still, when two smaller O's bumped into it, one above the other, and they turned the "I" into "B." These two letters can be built with straight pieces of the equipment and part-circles.

Then someone made a "B" with only the top small broken O fastened on, and none at the bottom, and that became the letter "P." Teach the child the difference between the respective "sound-friends" of B and P.

"After that a friendly letter came, who said he would like to be like P, but he couldn't stand unless he had another foot on the ground, so he was given another foot, and he was called 'R'."

J can be represented as a letter that looks rather like an I, but "with a bent leg."

S needs very little teaching to be easily learnt, together with its correct sound, and there only remain C and G. You will need two of the smaller half-circles to build the letter S.

C can be learnt as being "half an O, with a little head peeping from inside the top of it." To build it with the equipment you have made, one of the larger half-circles should be used, and a linen button, with a face painted on it, and a fringe of brown, black or yellow wool sewn round it for hair.

G is shown to be another broken O with a little stool to sit upon, inside it.

After these few short lessons the toddler should be able to pick out and show you any letter you ask for, and know the sound of every letter in the alphabet, and he should now be given some practice in forming them with the equipment, and later in writing them in an exercise book with a pencil.

This plan of teaching the letters as "busy little workers" with their special "sound-friends" to help them, does make the children take an interest in the letters, and they feel they are alive, so that they begin to *seek* more knowledge of them. Later, when you feel the time has come to teach your little one the order of the Alphabet, you can tell him that the Alphabet is the place where all the letters sleep, and each of them has to go there in its correct position. It is a little "street" and each letter has its own little "house" to go into, so that the child will be able to imagine walking down the Alphabet Street, saying which letter each "house" belongs to. It is far better, however, to teach the letters themselves first, each with its own individuality, so that he will take an interest in the position in which each of them lives in the "Alphabet Street" when it comes to the time for learning their correct consecutive order.

CHAPTER III

READING AND SPELLING

BEGINNING TO "CREATE" WORDS WITH EQUIPMENT

Your small pupil will, of course, have learnt the sounds of the letters before you attempt to teach him any reading or spelling. As the English language has so many inconsistencies in the pronunciation of words, with certain similarities in the combination of letters, a difficulty arises in choosing by which method we prefer to teach a child to read. If we are to teach by the phonetic method alone, we are confronted with the disadvantage of these inconsistencies, but the phonetic method has, nevertheless, its very strong supporters. Undoubtedly, also, spelling has to be acquired satisfactorily by some method or another, and it is debatable which reading system has the most to recommend it as an aid to the learning of spelling.

In the very elementary stages I have found that it is a simple matter to avoid presenting children with inconsistently spelt words, or inconsistently pronounced words, when the phonetic method is adopted. It is better to give them a good foundation in the general principles of sound combinations, at the same time accustoming them to recognise at a glance those short words which occur frequently in the average sentences, such as of, to, and, the, etc.

Presenting children with such contradictory pronunciations as SON and ON, BUT and PUT; etc., can be avoided in the early stages of their progress, whilst a system of basing the building-up of short words on the normal vowel sounds seems to me to hold advantages.

Apart from the fact that I really have proved it by results, I have two reasons for coming to this conclusion, the first being that of late years, in spite of what are considered "improvements" in modern ways of teaching, the average child is not such a good speller as formerly; and the second being that it helps to cultivate a keen ear for vocal sounds

Ask the average "man in the street" to read aloud the following words which you have written down:—FIR, FARE, and FUR. You will find that he will pronounce the vowel sound alike in each case. Try him with the words YEW and YOU, and you will probably find that he reads both words without any difference in pronunciation. His ears are not attuned to the finer differences in the sounds of the vowels, but these differences make a great contribution to the beauty of our national language, and it is doing a child a disservice to neglect training his or her ear to that beauty.

In commencing to teach your toddler, place the vowels A, E, I, O, and U, one below the other on the table, using the equipment you had for the teaching of the block capitals. Familiarize him with the fact that these are the VOWELS. Tell him to put a B before and a T after the A. Demonstrate how these three letters combine with

their little "sound-friends" to build between them the word BAT. Then write it down in block capitals and let him read it again from your written copy. Turn back to the equipment on the table and tell the child to put a B before and a T after the next vowel, which is E. Help him to learn the difference which that one middle letter (the vowel) makes in the sound now built, and write it down in block capitals for him, under the first word you wrote, letting him read it. Continue with the B and the T before and after each of the vowels, and help the child to read all the words several times from your written copies. In the case of the vowel O, of course, there is no such word as BOT, but it must be included in the lessons for the purpose of including the vowel sound.

Follow the same principle in easy stages with other consonants before and after the five vowels, such as BAN, BEN, BIN, BON, and BUN—TAP, TEP, TIP, TOP, and TUP. Avoid, at the present stage, any sets in which the vowel sound of O varies from the O in TOP to the O in TON, SON, etc. Also avoid the variation in U such as occurs in the different pronunciation of BUT and PUT. Keep for the present to the words in which U is pronounced as in BUT, BUD, SUN, etc. Later, the child can be accustomed to the variations, but in the very elementary stages they are better left out, to avoid confusing him.

Another day, some of the frequently occurring words, such as those mentioned in an earlier paragraph, can be taught.

When some progress has been made in the vowel sounds already suggested, their *literal* sounds in

words may be attempted. Take some of the words already learnt, such as MAT, MET, MIT, MOT, and MUT. Tell the child that if these words have the vowel E at the end, the middle vowel is so afraid of not being noticed that it has to be sounded by its own name (the actual sound of the letter when you say it by itself), the A being sounded like "A" (mate); the E like "E" (mete), and so on. In the case of the word "mete" you can at once teach the toddler that it is the beginning of the word "meter." Ask him what a gas meter is, an electric light meter, a slot meter, etc., and explain that m-e-t-e is the beginning of the word, but that the "meat" which we eat is spelt with an M before the word "eat." Teach him to spell the word "eat" and then tell him to put an M before it for the "meat we eat." This is a little diversion which will relieve any oncoming boredom, and also the association of ideas will help him to remember the spelling of meat we eat. Return to the literal vowel sounds and take the child right through them—MATE, METE, MITE, MOTE, and MUTE, always reminding him that the first vowel is afraid of not being heard when the vowel E is at the end of the word, so it has to have its name sounded plainly like that. When you come to the word MOTE you can make another diversion for the child by teaching him at once that it is a word meaning a "speck," such as a speck of dust, but that the moat round a castle is spelt m-o-a-t, and rhymes with the word b-o-a-t, which is something you would need if the moat was very deep and you wanted to cross it or go along it. Teach your pupil to spell m-o-a-t and b-o-a-t, and let him under-

stand the difference between MOTE as spelt in the little set of words belonging to the "jealous middle vowels with the E at the end of the words," and spelt MOAT to rhyme with BOAT. This, again, is a helpful association of words

Such little pretences over the letters help to stimulate children's memories. I find it is a great help to children to give them some little clues by which to remember things, and that is one of the underlying principles of my methods. "Memory clues" are a definite aid in fixing things in children's minds

When reading has been introduced in the manner I have described, there are many reading-books suitable for the continuation of the subject, but in the meanwhile, after some progress has been made, the following little lessons in words of only one syllable can be attempted, and if you are clever at drawing it will be fun to let the child learn from you how to create his own illustrations of, say, a boy, a dog, a cat, a ball, and a bird. I have used the same words in many different sentences in order to give the child practice. In the first of these lessons no word has more than three letters, and in all the lessons the words are of only one syllable each

LET US SEE

LET ME SEE YOU CAN YOU SEE ME? I SEE THE BOY. CAN THE BOY SEE US? THE BOY IS BY THE TIN BOX. HE HAS A DOG I CAN SEE THE DOG. CAN YOU SEE THE DOG TOO? CAN THE DOG SEE ME? THE BOY AND THE DOG ARE BY THE TIN BOX. IT IS A BIG BOX AND IT IS RED. CAN YOU SEE IT?

BOY AND HIS DOG AND CAT

BOY WAS A WEE LAD JOCK WAS HIS DOG AND IT WAS A NICE DOG BOY TOOK JOCK TO PLAY ON THE LAWN. HE HAD A BALL TO PLAY WITH, AND WHEN HE SENT IT NEAR JOCK, THEN JOCK RAN TO GET IT FOR HIM BOY HAD A WEE CAT TOO. THE CAT HAD THE NAME OF TIM, AND IT RAN ON TO THE LAWN TO SEE THE GAME TIM WAS A NICE CAT AND JOCK WAS A NICE DOG. HE WAS A GOOD DOG. SOON THEY ALL WENT IN TO HAVE TEA. IT WAS A NICE TEA

THE CAT AND HER KIT

MIN WAS A CAT MIN HAD A WEE KIT AND THE KIT HAD NO NAME THE KIT HAD A BLUE BALL TO PLAY WITH. THE BALL WAS MADE OF WOOL. IT WAS A NICE BALL MIN AND THE KIT HAD A GAME ON THE LAWN WITH THE BLUE BALL MIN HAD A LONG TAIL AND THE KIT HAD A LONG TAIL TOO. THE CAT RAN ON THE LAWN AND THE KIT RAN TOO. THE CAT MADE THE BALL ROLL ON THE LAWN, AND THEN THE KIT HAD TO ROLL ON THE LAWN TOO. IT WAS FUN. THEN THEY WENT IN AND HAD SOME MILK. IT WAS NICE MILK. IT WAS NICE AND COOL.

MAY'S NEW COT (A little fairy story)

MAY WAS A WEE GIRL MAY HAD A NEW COT. HER NEW COT WAS A PALE BLUE ONE WITH BLUE BARS SHE SAT UP AND SHE PUT A FAT PINK HAND OUT TO FEEL

ONE OF THE BARS. IT FELT NICE AND COOL. THEN SHE SAW A WEE GOLD BIRD FLY INTO THE ROOM, AND IT CAME ON TO THE TOP RAIL OF THE COT. IT WAS A NICE GOLD BIRD. IT PUT ITS WEE HEAD ON ONE SIDE AND SAID, "MAY MUST LIE DOWN AND NOT PLAY. SHE MUST GO TO BYE-BYES NOW."

"WHO ARE YOU, WEE GOLD BIRD?" SAID MAY.

"LIE DOWN AND I WILL TELL YOU," SAID THE BIRD.

SO MAY LAY DOWN AND THEN THE BIRD SAID, "I AM THE SLEEP-BIRD I COME TO GIVE WEE GIRLS NICE SLEEP. SHUT YOUR EYES AND I WILL SING." MAY SHUT HER EYES AND THE GOLD BIRD SANG BIRD SONGS, AND SOON MAY HAD GONE TO SLEEP.

THE NEXT DAY MAY SAT UP IN HER COT AND SAID, "MY DEAR GOLD BIRD HAS GONE NOW." AND THEN A WEE BIRD SAID, "IF MAY IS GOOD ALL DAY HER GOLD BIRD WILL COME BACK TO SING TO HER IN HER COT AT BED TIME." SO MAY WAS A GOØD GIRL ALL DAY, AND WHEN BED TIME CAME SHE LAY DOWN IN HER NEW BLUE COT AND SHUT HER EYES THEN THE WEE GOLD BIRD CAME BACK AND SANG HER TO BYE-BYES ONCE MORE

CHAPTER IV

SPECIAL METHOD FOR TEACHING TO WRITE

Children having learnt their letters first in the form of block capitals, are often puzzled at being confronted with letters in cursive form. Sometimes they think they are entirely different letters, so I tell them "they are the same letters with their outdoor clothes on." They accept this as an easily understood reason for the new form in which the letters are now introduced. When teaching the *capitals* in cursive writing I tell them "the letters are now wearing their very best clothes." This explanation of still another way of making the letters which were originally known in their block capital shape is usually popular with the tinies, who enjoy trying to put the "best clothes" on nicely.

For the first few lessons in teaching how handwriting should be attempted, the wee child will require an exercise book ruled with double spacing. It is a good plan to rule lines also down the page, dividing the double spacing into squares, for the preliminary lessons. This is a help in regulating the size and "spread" of the letters. Paper, as a result of the recent war, has of necessity been of poor quality, so it will be found helpful to the child if the stout paper back of another exercise book, of

similar size to that being used, is placed between the page to be written on and the next page. This makes a more solid foundation upon which to write.

When they first commence to learn writing—children will often be found to form their letters by writing in the wrong direction, starting, for example at the foot of a stroke instead of at the top and going upwards instead of downwards, or beginning and ending an O at the bottom. If this tendency is shown, instead of perpetually correcting the children and undermining their self-confidence, I have found it very helpful to indicate the direction in which they should write by means of coloured dots, using red, green and yellow

Commence with the letter *l* Make a copy of this letter and ask the toddler to try and imitate it in the first space in the book, commencing where you have made a red spot above the lines, going through the green one which you have made on the bottom line, and finishing on the yellow one. Let this be done as many times as necessary, first with and then without coloured dots.

When the child can write the *l* fairly successfully, teach the letter *t* in the same way, saying that this letter is not quite so tall as its sister *l* but that *t* wears a collar, and it is rather a funny collar because it is perfectly straight.

i may be learnt after this. "*i* is much smaller than *l* and he has to keep right in between the two lines, but he tries to reach over the top by throwing his cap up" (The dot of the *i* is his "cap.")

Then *e* follows easily, and next *b* can be shown as a letter very much like *l* but with "a finger held out to reach the next letter."

Practice must be had in writing these five letters separately, and then the two words "let" and "bit" may be used for further practice, as it is much more encouraging for little children of average intelligence to find they are achieving *word* writing than to labour through what seems to them a great many letters with very little meaning

When this stage has been successfully passed, new letters must be given

Teach the small pupil the right direction in which to write the letter O and when this has been mastered he can be taught how to turn an O into a d "by joining an l on to it."

a is fairly easily taught next, and the only other two letters commencing with complete circles are g and q After teaching q the letter u should immediately follow, reminding the child that you taught him with the block capitals "q is a very shy little letter which will not help to build any words unless it is allowed to have its special friend u by its side, standing immediately after it."

Eleven letters will then have been learnt, and a little practice in writing short words which include some of these letters may now be given, encouraging the wee child to feel that further advance in achievement has been made. Such words as BAD, GOOD, DOLL, and the rather longer word QUEUE may be tried

U having been the last letter learnt w can follow as being another letter which "holds out a friendly finger, like b does." v naturally follows as a suitable letter to teach next, and in order to remind your pupil of the difference in forming these two

letters, he can be told that "they are two sister letters, but *w* is fatter than *v* "

y can then be taught, as it has a component part corresponding to the curves in the last three which were given.

j can then follow, and as it has a dot like *i* a similar little explanation can be given to that given for the dotted letter before

Z can be next, and then *C*, which is similar to the block letter *C*, so will represent no difficulty now. Following *C* can come *X*, written like two *C*'s back to back, and then *S*.

The last four letters learnt having been fairly easy, a difficult one can now be attempted, and this is the letter *f* This letter often takes much perseverance on everybody's part Make a copy of it in the style in which you wish it to be learnt, and ask the child what it reminds him of One child once told me he thought it was "like a little gun," and another child saw in it a resemblance to "the bag they bring round for the money in Church " It is quite remarkable the way little children do associate things in their minds with other things which to our more practical eyes may seem quite irrelevant, but when we understand their viewpoints we find it easier to teach them.

n and *m* should come next, and, like the last two letters which were somewhat alike, they can be said to be "sister-letters, but one is fatter than the other."

p "a letter which looks over the top line just a little way, and below the bottom line further still" can be given next, and then *h* "which is not quite

so inquisitive as *p* as it *never* looks below the line, but it does look above the line."

k will be a little more difficult than *h*, but it must be remembered that in the block capitals "*k* had a letter to post in the pillar-box," and when learning to write it in this new form the child can be told that "*k* is still posting letters, with his outdoor clothes on this time "

The last letter to be learnt is *r*, and when this has been learnt a few short words can be given to the child to write. Short sentences with words of only a few letters should be practised, and a little lesson in the use of quotation marks can be given at this elementary stage, as these are frequently included in the earliest reading-books without an accompanying explanation to the child, who seems to be expected to understand them without being told ! If they are included in the elementary lessons on writing they will give very little trouble.

When a little progress has been made, the following sentence will be found to be excellent practice. Except for the word "jack-daw" which I have hyphenated, it contains no word of more than five letters, and it includes every letter in the alphabet. If capital letters have not yet been attempted, block capitals can be used at the beginning of "Quack" and "Buzz," as another *q* and another *b* are included in the passage, to cover those learnt in cursive writing by the child .—"Quack," said the jack-daw, and the wasp and the fly each sang "Buzz," but the five or six moths were quiet.

CHAPTER V

LEARNING NUMERALS CREATIVELY

We next come to the teaching of figures. These are taught in very much the same way as the letters, but being now at a slightly more advanced stage, the child does not need imaginative drawings, such as those suggested for the letters, in order to remember them. Any plain illustration of the figures will help to show how to "build" them with the equipment.

Before commencing to teach the shapes it is advisable to train each child to count up to ten.

You will need similar materials for the making of the figures equipment as were used for the letter equipment. In addition to these, curtain-rings are useful for building the figure 9, the figure 6, and the figure 8.

Show a picture of the figures; point to the figure 1, and ask for a "1" to be put down on the desk or table with the equipment. There will be no difficulty, of course, about this. Then demonstrate how to make the "1" into "10." *Explain that the round figure is called "naught" when it is by itself and then it means "nothing." And it still means "nothing" if it tries to put itself in front of another figure. But if another figure has an 0 put after itself, the 0 is then turned into a little fairy called "aught" and makes the other figure worth much more—just like magic!* It will be understood that ten is much more than one, so you can explain

that if the naught went and put itself *before* the one, it would only be in the way, and it wouldn't make the One worth any more, or even any less, but still just ONE. But if the One were to say, "Come along and stand just *after* me," then the little fairy "Aught" would be clever enough to turn the One into Ten

Later, you can teach the difference made to a Two when it is followed by an 0—and the difference to three, four, five, etc., when followed by the little fairy "aught"

After teaching about the 1 and the 0, show each figure separately, and let a little time be spent in building all the figures which come in between 1 and 10. Show how 2 can be built with a semi-circle for its "hat" and two straight pieces for its "body." Then point to the illustration of 3, give two straight pieces for the top half and a semi-circle for underneath, and let an attempt be made by the little fingers to build it. It is not quite so easy as the figure 2, so there may be a little hesitation at first, but a few hints from you will help. A good look at the picture of 4 should enable this to be built without much difficulty, and success in doing this will give encouragement, and then the other figures can be attempted.

2, 3, and 5, being the most difficult, can be taught as being "three little cousins who are rather like each other, but yet none of them quite the same." They all have the same component parts, arranged differently, so a good deal of practice should be given in building them.

Later, all the figures should be written down by you and then copied by the child.

CHAPTER VI

FIRST ARITHMETIC LESSONS

It will serve your purpose if you have a supply of clean garden labels for this lesson; these can be made more attractive if they are first painted in different colours and allowed to dry out thoroughly before being used.

Give the child a label to hold in each hand, and tell him that he has ONE in each hand. Ask him to show you the figure 1. Then ask him to put both the labels in the same hand, and teach him that 1 and 1 make 2, so that now he has 2 in one hand, showing him the figure 2. Now give your pupil one garden label in the empty hand, tell him to add it to the two in his other hand, and that is 2 and 1, which make 3 in one hand. Show him the figure 3. Do this several times, starting each time with 1 and getting to 3.

When this has been thoroughly learnt you can gradually progress to higher numbers, and then let the child make the figures with the equipment and demonstrate his work by putting the correct number of garden labels by the figures he makes and the sums he does

Afterwards let him write the numbers in an exercise book, making strokes to represent the garden labels, in order to show that he knows the numbers represented by the figures.

During one of the lessons make up a little story. "So-and-So" (naming someone he knows) "is in a room by herself; then in comes So-and-So to see her" (naming someone else he knows), "so that was 1 person added to 1 person, making 2 people. Then in came three more friends, so that was 3 more added to the 1 and 1, how many were there in the room then?"

Try to get up to TEN in addition, and teach the child that this rule of arithmetic is called "*Addition*." Then let him learn a little *Subtraction*, substituting a taking-away process for the adding process, using wooden garden labels again.

A change may be made, and monotony avoided, by letting the child have a little "subtraction game" with his own feet and yours. Tell him to stand beside you, with his own two feet and yours, all touching each other in a row. Ask the child to put one of his feet behind him, so that he has taken 1 away from 4, which leaves "How many . . . ?" When the correct answer has been given tell the child to take away his other foot so that now 2 have been taken away from 4, and ask how many that leaves.

Then tell him to come back and put his two feet beside yours again. Then tell him to hide both his feet away at the same time, so that again 2 have been taken away from 4, and see if the correct answer comes without hesitation this time, when you ask for it. A similar game may be tried with several pairs of shoes, increasing the numbers and those you subtract. Later on, figures may be made with the equipment, their correct shapes copied

from examples by you, and the sums already learnt worked in figures in an exercise book, gradually and patiently increasing the numbers.

In these early stages of arithmetic it is important that numbers should be learnt by demonstration with actual things, so that the figures in the sums shall be implanted in the child's mind with a real knowledge of their numbers.

Before any attempt is made to teach children to "say" the multiplication tables, it is as well for them to know what is meant by *Multiplication*. It is much more interesting for children to learn to "say" things if they have some idea in their minds as to what it really is that they are "saying." And, of course, if children are interested in the things they have to learn they will naturally learn them far better.

Ask the child to pass you 1 garden label; then ask him to pass you "one *again*." (Be sure to say "ONE AGAIN" and not "one *more*," in order to avoid confusing multiplication with addition.) Then ask *how many times the child has passed you 1 garden label*. He should reply "twice," and then you can say "Yes, that is quite right, and passing me 1 twice over has made 2—look!—so twice 1 are 2." See that this is thoroughly understood, and then ask for two garden labels to be passed to you, accept these, and ask the child to pass you "two AGAIN." Accept the second two, and ask how many times you have had 2 passed to you; when the answer "twice" has been given, let him count how many twice 2 made, and he will learn that "twice 2 made 4."

Increase your numbers in this way according to how the child manages to pick the idea up. At this stage it is easier for children to learn in the following order —

Twice one make 2

Twice two make 4

Three ones make 3

Three twos make 6

rather than to keep on increasing in twice times. The time has not come yet for memorising the multiplication tables to any extent, however, but only for learning to work multiplication out as suggested above, so that the principle is thoroughly understood.

When *Division* is attempted the garden labels can again be used. Ask the child to count 4 labels and place them in one pile before him. Then ask him to divide the pile into two sets, each having the same number of labels as the other. Then ask him to count and to tell you how many labels there are in each set. When he tells you "2 in each set," you will explain that he divided 4 by 2 and got 2 for the answer. Do the same thing commencing with a pile of 6; and later again commencing with piles of 8 and 10, and always dividing by 2. After some practice has been had in *EVEN* numbers only, numbers may be commenced which are divisible by 3, and a gradually larger pile used as the child progresses.

Later on, he can be taught to put the sums he has worked out down in his exercise book and shown how to work out on paper simple division sums. He should be taught that dividing the piles of labels

into other piles was a rule of arithmetic called *Division*.

Practice in the exercise book may be had in all the sums learnt, and gradually it will be found that the child readily manages simple addition sums, simple subtraction, multiplication and division

The great thing at first is to arouse interest and an intelligent understanding of the actual meaning of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In a very short time the wee pupil will be ready for little arithmetic books

CHAPTER VII

GUIDING CREATIVE INSTINCTS

INTRODUCING GEOGRAPHY

In connection with this lesson the following materials will be required :—

A few old, clean newspapers

Some very small fresh stalks from flowers or from leaves.

A small supply of spent matches, with the burnt ends cut off, and the clean parts painted with water colours in a variety of shades.

1 paper-knife, or 1 wooden garden label, or a few orange-sticks such as are used for manicure purposes.

2 very large meat-tins (baking tins), if these are available, but if not, 2 large tin tea-trays.

A small quantity of clean sand, such as that which is obtainable from a builder's yard.

1 small jug of clean water, preferably with the chill off.

1 large cooking spoon or very small trowel

1 large sheet of the strongest plain paper cut to the size of the bottom of one of the meat-tins, and made to fit in flat. On this paper draw an outline of the shape of England and

Wales, omitting any fine details. Colour the remainder of the paper blue, or greenish-grey, to represent the sea. A few white-crested waves painted in make it more realistic.

Every child evinces some creative instinct to a greater or lesser degree. Often these instincts are unrecognised by their elders and are, in fact, sometimes even mistaken for destructive inclinations or "naughtiness."

The little child who deliberately makes messes with soil and water, with breathing on the window-pane to make finger-marks in the steam, even with licking the window in order to watch the moisture he has made course down, is not so dirty as we may feel him to be, but is deliberately creating some amusement for himself, some sense of achievement which is independent and spontaneous. This absorbs his interest so much for the moment, that he is oblivious of any sense of dirtiness in connection with what he is doing and certainly innocent of a *wish* to be "naughty," although quite often he is *told* he is "naughty." His creative instinct is at work, and it should be recognised and diverted into more suitable channels.

Children can be taught to use water and sand under supervision, in large clean roasting-tins, or tin tea-trays, on the nursery table. I suggest the roasting-tins in preference to trays, because they are deeper and less liable to spill.

Spread newspapers on the table, so that any sand accidentally spilt can easily be put back. Let the child help to spread these papers and to put the tins

in position, so that he will feel some sense of usefulness—in which most children of the toddler age take a pride. When the two tins are placed side by side, half fill one with dry sand, and leave the other one empty, except for the paper on which you have drawn the outline of England and Wales. Do not use all the sand you have, as you will need more for the second half of the lesson.

In winter, to avoid chills, use water that is tepid. A small jug full will be enough for requirements.

Now let the child understand that he is going to learn something and that at first he must be guided by you.

Begin by asking him just to make a little mound in the sand, in the centre of the tin, with a wide path all round it. When this has been done pour a little of the water very gently in the path until the mound is surrounded, and teach him that it is now an island. When the toddler has thoroughly learnt what an island is, other physical features can be taught, such as rivers, valleys, capes, straits, etc. These can be made with the sand and water, and will provide some happy and instructive occupation for the child.

Next, transfer attention to the other tin, in which you have placed the paper you prepared, with its outline of England and Wales.

See that the sand in the first tin, in which you were working before, is now of a plastic consistency, adding either more sand or more water, as needed. Have also ready the paper-knife, wooden garden label, or other implement suitable for trimming edges. Now let the child completely cover the map in the tray with damp sand. Guide the little hand

so that this is done very carefully, commencing in the centre with a very small quantity, and spreading it slowly to the edges, trying to avoid any of the sand getting into the surrounding "seas."

Now teach him how to trim the edges tidily by going over the outline of the coast with the implement. Teach him the word "coast," showing which part is meant by the word. Explain to him that when he spends a holiday at the seaside he is staying at the *coast*.

When this stage has been satisfactorily passed, explain that the model is the shape of England and Wales, and show the position of the place in which the child is living, letting him plant one of the coloured match-sticks in the spot where it lies.

The model thus made can be left until another day for further use, when it will probably require re-damping; or it can be mixed up again and re-made another day—usually the more satisfactory alternative.

When the next lesson is given in geography, mountain ranges may be represented by small ricks of sand made by the child. Take out an atlas and show him where the mountain ranges are, and then see if he can find approximately the right place on the damp sand model.

For rivers, very small stalks of leaves or of flowers are effective, laid on the sand in the correct places.

North, South, East and West should be thoroughly well learnt; spent match-sticks may be planted in the respective positions, using a different colour for each point of the compass.

Gradually more and more may be learnt by means of the sand model. Match-sticks pushed

well in so that only a very short stump may be seen above the surface, may be used to mark the chief cities and towns, using three all touching each other and sunk to the same level, for London. Only a few towns should be attempted at first, and it will be better if they are ones of which the little pupil has heard before, so that the positions of those with familiar names may be learnt before new names have to be memorised.

CHAPTER VIII

DRILL

DRILL AND SAFETY FIRST

(a) Although, of course, young children should not be allowed to cross the roads unattended, they cannot be taught too early to take the utmost care. Exercises in teaching them to cross *straight over and never slantwise* may be given in a large room or playground, either to a number of children or to one alone.

Make white lines on the ground to represent pavements. At various points on one of the "pavements" place articles, such as a doll, a child's cap, a book, and a pencil-box. On the opposite "pavement" have your toddler, or the few toddlers, standing. Explain that the two white lines are the pavements and that the space between them is the road. Ask one of the children to cross the road, to pick up whatever article you mention, and be sure that you choose one which is some distance further along the opposite pavement from where the child is standing. Tell the child to cross over, pick up the article mentioned, and bring it back to the exact point where he is standing now.

On no account must he be allowed to cross slantwise towards the article, but must be checked at once on making any attempt to do so, being shown that the safe thing to do is to cross to the spot

immediately opposite to where he is standing, first looking alternately up and down the "road" to see that nothing is coming. On reaching the opposite side he must walk along the pavement to where the required article lies, and after picking it up he must return straight across the road to the spot from where he started. This procedure may be gone through several times, commencing from different points, and always telling the child to fetch something which is not exactly opposite to where he is standing, but to cross absolutely straight across and then walk along the pavement for the object, crossing back again to his own pavement *straight* across.

Traffic Lights Four large cardboard discs must be painted for use in this exercise. Paint two of them red on one side and amber on the reverse side, and the other two green only. At first, you will have to be the one to act as "Traffic Lights," having in your hands one red-versus-amber disc and one green one. Stand by the corner of your "pavement," facing down your "road." Hold one disc in each hand. First show the red disc, changing it to its reverse side (amber) after slowly counting to an agreed number, then moving it away behind your back and putting the green disc on view by placing your other arm across your chest, so that the hand holding the green disc is on the same side of your body as the hand which was previously exhibiting the red-versus-amber disc. The child must be taught to watch these "lights," to stand still on the "pavement" when the red is showing; and then when the amber is showing be prepared to

cross, but not to commence doing so until the green is on view, when he must immediately cross in an orderly way—not scrambling across, or tearing excitedly across, nor yet dawdling across, but marching very swiftly over in a purposeful manner, previously demonstrated by you.

After some practice, the child may be appointed to act as “Traffic Lights,” whilst you cross. Then if a third person can be drawn into the game, there may be two acting as “Traffic Lights,” standing at right angles to one another, with one showing the red disc when the other shows green, and vice versa, and the meaning of the demonstration being made clear to the child. Practice in crossing the improvised “pavements” may then be had from both directions.

DRILL AND GEOGRAPHY

(b) For these lessons in drill and geography it is again an advantage to have several children, although the lessons can be adapted for one child alone if necessary.

North, South, East and West can be given as boundaries in the room in which you are drilling, and the children may be taught how to find them by learning in which direction the sun is last seen each day “before it says ‘Good night’.” When the points of the compass are thus understood, the toddlers will enjoy standing in a row at “attention” facing West, and obeying the word of command—“All together, turn and face to the East!” Then, “Eyes front.” Then “Turn to the South,” afterwards marching them round the room, bringing

them to a standstill facing North. Repeat the commands, afterwards marching them round the room, bringing them to a standstill facing first one way and then another, until they have no hesitation in knowing the various points of the compass

When they are a little more advanced, they will enjoy "Counties and Capitals," which can be given in the following manner to a number of children, or using chairs as a substitute for circles of children if one child alone is playing.

Form groups of children into several small circles, leaving a number of children, corresponding to the number of circles, standing in a queue. Each circle is given the name of a County, and each child in the queue is given the name of a corresponding County Capital. (In the case of one child playing this educative game alone, of course, the child is told the County represented by each circle of chairs, and will have to find the right circle to fit into, when given the name of a Capital.)

The leader of each circle of children representing a County must be first told by you, in a whisper, the name of its Capital, and then at the word of command the children forming the Counties stand at attention, leaving a gap in their circle. The children in the queue are then told to march to their own Counties. The leader of each circle must challenge the child who attempts to enter, saying "We are such-and-such a County; what town are you?" If they receive the right name of their Capital they must welcome him in. Any child who goes to the wrong County must return to the starting point, whilst the County which is left without its Capital must wait until the next time the queue

is formed. The same procedure will then be repeated, and the child who was at fault the first time will probably be right on the second occasion.

PURELY DRILL

(c) A warming exercise on chilly days is the following, and one child alone can have this exercise just as easily as a number together :—

The child must stand at attention, heels together, hands on hips. Extend the right arm upwards in a slanting direction, hand fully outstretched, keeping the left hand still on hip, and at the same time taking one pace to the right, stamping once with the right foot and bending the right knee, the left leg being fully stretched in a slanting position, corresponding to the direction of the right arm, and without moving the left foot. This is called "The Charge." Return right arm and right foot to the first position, both legs straight again, hands on hips and heels together. Then make the "Charge" in similar manner to the left side, using left arm to do so this time, and left foot, with left knee bent and right leg stretched. Repeat these "Charges" several times, first to right, and then to left, returning to original position, with hands on hips and heels together, between each "charge."

A more gentle exercise is given as follows.—The child must stand erect, heels together, arms hanging at sides, palms inwards. Raise both arms, palms downwards, to the level of shoulders, slowly turn wrists until palms face upwards. Raise hands slowly until palms of hands meet above head, at the same time turning face upwards and looking

at hands. Slowly separate hands until only the tips of the middle fingers meet, with palms now facing *downwards*. Return arms to level of shoulders, which will result in palms once more facing *upwards*, head erect once more, turn wrists until palms face downwards again, and return arms to their first position. When properly done this is rather a graceful exercise.

CHAPTER IX

TEACHING THE TINIES TO TELL THE TIME

In this chapter I propose to describe a game which enables any toddler to learn to tell the time very quickly.

Small children love this game, in which a railway train is represented, especially if they are allowed to add to the effect by making realistic sounds.

You will need some Bristol-board, some brass-headed paper fasteners, and some paints or crayons, as well as pen and ink.

The larger you make your outfit the better, and of course everything should be cut to scale.

From your Bristol-board cut out six discs on which to draw clock faces, as per the directions I will presently give you. Then cut out six narrow strips, which must be rounded at one end, and tapering to a point at the other end, to represent the large (minute) hand of the clocks

Then cut out three more strips, a little shorter, to represent the hour hand. Round each of these off at one end, bringing the other end to a point. On each of these hour-hands draw a railway guard. The hour-hands will only be required in the last three lessons, so put them aside until the fourth lesson commences.

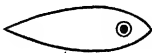
Cut a further set of six strips, all longer than either the minute-hands or the hour-hands. They

must be longer than from the centre of your clock face to the outer edge of same. Near one end of each of these longer strips draw a little railway train, or just the engine of same, travelling from the left side of your strip to the right. From the apex above your train draw a little pointer, coming down immediately over the exact centre of the engine. Each of these "train-strips" will ultimately be fastened with a paper fastener to the middle of the clock faces, on the under side, with only the end showing. They must therefore be made of a sufficient length for the train to protrude over the edge of the disc, with the wheels appearing to travel on the rim.

Now take the *FIRST* of your six discs and mark on it the four quarter-hours. Each of these is a "station". The one at the top is called "O'CLOCK" and represents a terminus; the first Quarter-hour is called "*A Quarter-Past Station*"; then you have the "*Half-Past Station*," which is a Junction; and then "*A Quarter-To Station*". Draw each of these to represent small railway stations. Throughout the six lessons it will simplify matters if two contrasting colour-schemes are used for the two sides of the clock-face, and a third colour used for "O'clock" and "Half-past".

Take one of the minute-hands you have prepared and one of the strips on which you have drawn the train or engine, fasten these with a paper-fastener to the centre of the first of the clock faces. The minute-hand, of course, must be on the face of the clock, but place the other strip *behind* the face, in such a manner that the train protrudes over the edge and can be moved round by the paper-fastener,

TEACHING THE TINIES TO TELL THE TIME.



THE MINUTE HAND



THE HOUR HAND



STRIP TO BE FIXED BEHIND THE CLOCK FACE
WITH THE ENGINE APPEARING ON THE RIM OF THE DISC.

so as to arrive at each "station" simultaneously with the minute-hand, the little pointer over the engine indicating unmistakably which "Station" the minute-hand is at.

THE FIRST LESSON. Having prepared the first of your discs in the manner described, you are now ready to give the child his first lesson. It can begin with a little talk about railways. He will perhaps readily understand that trains travel on different routes, which are called "lines." There are sometimes long journeys to be made, and people often commence the journey on one line and have to change at a "Junction" to another line. The clock can now be described as a railway, with two different "Lines." From the "O'Clock" Station to "Half-Past" the train travels on the "*Past Line*," and then at "Half-Past" it changes to the "*To-Line*." The "*Past Line*" is down hill all the way, and the "*To-line*" is uphill all the way. The youngster can now be taught the four stations marked on clock-face number one, commencing at "O'Clock," then going on the "*Past Line*" to "A Quarter Past" and to "Half-Past"; and up hill on the "*To-Line*" to "A Quarter To," back to "O'Clock," which is the terminus.

He will enjoy going over this lesson several times until he knows the four stations accurately. The minute-hand and the picture of the train can be moved round simultaneously as required, and as this is done he can be allowed to make the sound "chuh," "chuh," "chuh," to represent the puffing of the engine, stopping when the train and minute-

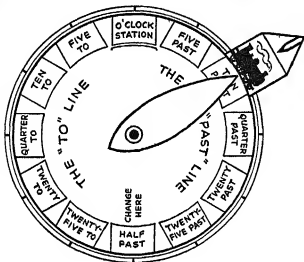
hand stop, and giving the name of the station when you ask him which it is.

THE SECOND LESSON. For your second lesson on telling the time, your second circle of Bristol-board must have the minute-hand and the railway train affixed exactly similarly to the first, but in this case all the "Stations" on one side of the clock-face must be marked, as shewn in my illustration, commencing with "O'Clock," then showing "Five Past," the "Ten Past," and so on to "Half Past." It must be emphasised to the child that these are the stations on the *Past Line*, and that they are all down hill. Move the minute hand and the engine simultaneously from one place to another on "The Past Line," until he has learnt to tell you without hesitation which "Station" you have reached. This lesson touches upon the "Past Line" only, for which only the right hand side of the clock-face is used, as well as "O'Clock" at the top.

THE THIRD LESSON. For your third lesson you will require a different circle of Bristol-board. On this you must have all the stations on "*The To Line*" shown, as well as "Half-Past" and "O'Clock," leaving the other side of the clock-face blank. The minute-hand and the train must be fixed as on the previous disc and moved simultaneously. This time it must be impressed upon the child that on "The To Line" the train has to go up hill all the way until it gets back to the terminus at "O'Clock." Let practice be had in learning the names of these stations, commencing, of course, at "Twenty-Five To."

THE FOURTH LESSON When your small pupil has thoroughly learnt and mastered all the "Pasts" and all the "To's," it will be necessary to prepare your fourth circle of Bristol-board by marking it similarly to your disc No. 2 (Stations on the "Past Line"). Then fix on it with a paper fastener one of the three small hour hands which you have prepared, representing a Guard. Under this fix one of the minute-hands, and again, on the back of the clock-face, protruding over the outer rim of the circle, one of the railway train strips, which must always be worked in conjunction with the minute-hand.

Commence the lesson by telling the child (who has already learnt all the stations as "Five Past," "Ten Past," "A Quarter Past," etc.), that as well as their names every station has a number. At this stage he must be taught to count the hours on the clock from one to six consecutively. When he knows these numbers, as well as the Station Names previously taught, he can be taught that the "little" hand is a Railway Guard, and that on the Clock Railway it is his job to keep counting how many people there are on the station platforms. He does not travel in the train like the Guards of most railways. The Guard of the Clock Railway only walks. Sometimes he is not even on the same line as the train but has to notice most carefully which line the train is on. If it is on the "Past Line" the Guard looks behind him towards "O'Clock," and counts *how many people there are left in the very last Station he himself has just passed*. First he calls out the name of the Station the train is at, and then he calls out the number of people



CLOCK FACE

SHOWING STATIONS ON
THE "PAST" LINE (DOWNHILL)
WITH THE MINUTE HAND
AND TRAIN BOTH AT
"TEN PAST" STATION

there are on the platform *in the last Station he himself walked past*. For instance, if the train is at "Ten Past" Station, and the Guard has just left the station whose number is No. 4, he calls out "Ten Past 4" Or if the train should be at the Station named "Twenty-Five Past" and the Guard has just left the Station whose number is 3, he would call out "Twenty-Five Past 3," because the number of people on the platform is always the same as the number by which the child learnt to know the station Keep to the "Past Line" only for this lesson, devoting the next lesson to the "To Line."

THE FIFTH LESSON It must be remembered that if the train is on the "To Line" it is going up hill The stations on this Line have also numbers, so the pupil must be taught the hours on this line, as he was on the "Past Line," continuing to count from seven to twelve. The Guard is now fixed on to another disc, similarly marked to your No. 3 circle of Bristol-board. The train-strip is also attached, underneath, with the train or engine appearing above the outer rim, and, of course, the minute-hand is fixed on the face of the clock as it was for your last lesson.

The Guard is now walking up hill, but he has to notice again which line the train is on, and to call out the name of the Station it has reached. On the "To Line" he must always count the number of people in the Station immediately *in front* of him, instead of those in the station behind him as he did on the "Past Line." He walks up the "To Line" and when the train stops at a Station he calls out that Station's name, and then he calls out the

number of the people in the next station he himself will reach. It is always the same number as that by which the child learnt to know the Station. If the train (and the minute hand) should be at "A Quarter To," and the Guard should be *nearly at* the Station whose number is 8 he will call out "A Quarter to 8." Or if the minute-hand and train should be at the Station named "Twenty-Five To," and he is *nearly at* the Station whose number is 12, the Guard will call out "Twenty-Five to 12."

THE SIXTH LESSON. A short special lesson will be required to be devoted to the "O'Clock Terminus," for this is the only part of the journey where the number of people is called out by the Guard *before* he calls out the name of the Station. When the train and the minute-hand are at "O'Clock" the Guard himself will always have arrived at one of the Stations, and not be walking in between them, so he counts the people in *what-ever* Station he has just reached, *and calls out their numbers before calling out where the train is*. After calling out the number he *then* looks at the train which is at the Terminus and calls out "O'Clock." So, when the train and the minute-hand are at "O'Clock," if the Guard is at Number 2, he calls out, "2 O'Clock." Or if he should be at Number 9 when the train and minute-hand are at "O'Clock," then he will call out "9 O'Clock." A little practice will be required for this lesson, using first the "Past Line" disc and then the "To Line" disc.

Your last circle can be complete with all the stations of both Lines marked on it, one side

painted in one colour, and the other side in another colour, with "O'Clock" and "Half-Past" painted in still another colour. The two hands and train should be arranged as previously, and your pupil should by this time be able to read the time at any point on this clock-face. It is only a very short stage further for him to be able to tell the time correctly on any ordinary clock or watch.

CHAPTER X

SELF EXPRESSION AND DISCIPLINE

Every child—that is to say, every child in average good health—needs an outlet for his physical energy. I think this is generally realised and provided for by exercise, such as the daily walks, games of a mildly athletic type, etc., and in this respect I have elsewhere advocated the provision, where possible, of plenty of floor space in the nursery, so that in really bad weather some substitute may be had for the curtailment of the daily walk and outdoor games. A climbing-frame can be successfully constructed out of strong step-ladders, if no other contrivance for climbing is available, but it must, of course, be fixed by responsible hands, and on no account be left unattended when young children are the ones for whom we are catering.

Climbing is a natural instinct with all children, and is among the first to evince itself. Almost before a baby can toddle it tries to climb. You will see young children, still at the stage of crawling, attempting to climb on to chairs and tables, and babies very soon make for the stairs and steps, trying to climb them, oblivious of any danger, because at that stage in their development their sense of danger is associated almost exclusively with unaccustomed noises, unaccustomed voices, and sometimes with unaccustomed darkness, or with what to them is phenomenal. Fear in infancy is

also associated with the actual feeling of falling, but the very young children's sense of danger is not sufficiently imaginative to cause them to *anticipate* a fall. So the baby who can crawl soon tries to climb. Toddlers attempt to climb gates, and older children climb walls, and very often trees, all of which shows that climbing is one of the most obvious natural instincts of the child. It is definitely a mistake to suppress this characteristic altogether, or to curtail it to any great extent. Some provision should be made for its 'safe expression.

I must confess that I have never forgotten my childhood's delight in swinging on gates! I am afraid I often got into trouble for it, but the desire to do it whenever I got the chance overpowered my resistance against temptation! Since then I have so often, for the sake of other people's gates, had to restrain children from indulging in this very same form of pleasure, that I have frequently visualised a gymnastic nursery, with a good strong gate safely hinged on to a special construction, for the purpose of allowing the young occupants to swing on a gate unchecked.

Although I believe the need for adequate provision for physical expression is generally realised, I am often surprised to find how little importance is attached to the need for providing suitable channels through which the child can find expression for his complementary urges. If we watch children in the very poorest districts of any large city, we shall see that their love of dancing, singing, and miming triumphs over most of their 'circumstantial handicaps and disadvantages, asserting itself

in spite of all. Their instincts are demonstrated in the raw. We see them dancing and capering in abandonment, singing the latest popular choruses, and miming to the best of their untrained abilities.

Nowadays in the schools facilities are provided to some extent for the absorption of these instincts. Percussion bands, action songs, and in some schools Morris dancing, all provide a means for harmonious expression. This, of course, makes an excellent contribution towards the development of team spirit, as well as being an outlet for the expression of voice and gesture.

In the home life of the privately educated child, however, it is frequently the case that dancing begins and ends with one weekly lesson, and music is confined to a weekly lesson and a little daily practice. This is all to the good, of course, as far as it goes, but in most cases it does not go far enough. Children need some outlet for more *spontaneous* expression, not only at a stated time, or at stated intervals, but at times in their leisure hours when the natural urge comes upon them to caper about, or sing, or in some way to express themselves by sound and movement. All too frequently we are impelled to say to them, "*Do try not to make such a noise, do sit still; do keep quiet*." But in reality instead of, as it were, switching those natural urges of the children *off*, we should find a means of switching them *on*, to an organised form of expression. A nursery gramophone and some puppetry gloves are a help on these occasions, and some form of percussion music, such as a toy Xylophone, will provide both sound and movement.

What happens when spontaneity of natural high spirits in a child is *habitually* discouraged and repressed? By suppressing natural and innocent impulses we are setting up a mental conflict in the child, and he will in all probability eventually react to it in a very unhealthy way. He may try defiance first, and if this leads to more trouble he will perhaps end up by withdrawing into himself, feeling out of harmony with his surroundings. He is probably not yet of an age when he can describe his thoughts, even if he feels there is anyone by whom his confidence would be understood. At present he is too little to translate his feelings into words, but he takes refuge in an imaginary world of his own, and develops after a while an unhealthily exaggerated sense of his own capabilities and prowess. This assumes an importance in his own estimation out of all real proportion. The repression we have brought about by habitually quelling his innocent (even if, to us, annoying) impulses to shout and dance and imitate, finds him seeking another sort of outlet, which will probably be less innocently demonstrated. Then he will be found to be following his ego instinct to the exclusion of his social instincts.

During many years which I spent as a social worker in the Children's Police Court in Liverpool, it was by no means uncommon for me to come into contact with children (well past the nursery age, of course) who had actually "staged" fires in their own homes in order to focus attention to their own valour and prowess, when they were labouring under a sense of suppression of long duration, which had usually started with an unhappy and

mismanaged "toddlerhood" (if I may coin a word).

With the children in our immediate care to-day we have to face the fact that life all around them is much more progressive and stimulating than it was for the child of even one short generation ago. The modern child is stimulated to greater activity and nervous tension by the atmosphere created all around him. We must remember that if, unduly and unsympathetically, we suppress the activity created by this atmosphere we are setting up within him a mental conflict. On the one hand he is being urged to self-expression by the influences of his generation, and on the other hand he is being unnaturally repressed. If this mental conflict is set up, and allowed to continue, the child is likely to become anti-social later on. All sorts of complications in his development will then arise, according to the type of child he happens to be.

One type of child, when his *normal* urges are repressed, will find an outlet in vindictiveness; another will find a vent in small deceits, or even in actual dishonesty; another in morbid apprehensions, etc. Unfortunately, whatever type the child is, there is very little probability of the reaction to harsh suppression being healthy or desirable.

Let us take, for example, the type of child with a natural excess of energy, ingenuity and resourcefulness. All of these characteristics, in themselves, are good but they must be correctly blended with other characteristics to create the right balance, and they must also be rightly directed. Imagine for a moment what will happen to this energetic type of child, with an excess of ingenuity, if in his nursery

days we fail to supply him with sufficient scope of the right sort, and if we suppress his natural impulses entirely. He will, of course, find outlets of some sort himself, and it is as well to let him do so within reason, in order to produce self-reliance. But I am going to suppose that he is, unfortunately, one of those children we sometimes find whose parents, or Nanny, or governess, suppress his natural activities and provide him with no organised scope whatever for the urge that is in him. Under these circumstances his energy and natural love of mischief may be diverted from constructive ability, or athletic achievement of a desirable and social-spirited nature, to wilful damage, or cruelty (only partially realised by himself), or some other form of actual disservice, and he will be thoroughly anti-social.

Or again, take the more reserved type of child under similar conditions. If this child is given no inducement to expand, there is a risk that he will become morose later on. He may develop the ego spirit to an unhealthy degree. He will become not so much *anti*-social as *un*-social, because he is, to begin with, the introvert type. This type (the introvert) should be encouraged, in his nursery days, to take an interest in bright and sociable amusements, and any inclination he may develop to be boisterous should be welcomed, rather than suppressed.

Whilst I have emphasised the two points, (1) that we are doing children an injustice if we suppress their natural impulses of sound and movement; and (2) that we must realise the need to supply them with adequate facilities for self-expression, there

is a third point which we must consider in order to reach a well-balanced line of thought. And this third point is the consideration of *where encouragement ends and where over-indulgence begins*

As far as I have gone, there may be some who think that I am in favour of spoiling the child by over-encouragement of his natural impulses, but as a matter of fact I am very much opposed to any tendency to the actual spoiling of a child. This point has got to be carefully considered.

The child has far more intuition than most of us give him credit for. In point of fact, children are quite surprisingly clever little psychologists, in an unconscious way of their own ! They very quickly know to what extent they can take advantage of those in whose care they are. Without being able, of course, to define it, they will soon discover which is laxity of authority on our part, and which is *disciplined* indulgence, and it is a mistake to think that all forms of indulgence are necessarily spoiling. On the contrary, *disciplined* indulgence is the line at which we should aim, if we wish to give the child scope for his self-expression, and at the same time avoid spoiling him. But it is necessary to lay emphasis on that word "*disciplined*," because it is the key-word of the matter, and discipline is certainly needed to balance indulgence. The two, rightly blended and rightly directed, should lead to the ideal condition in the child.

There are two essentials needed for the proper maintenance of discipline—one is the ability to control *ourselves*, and the other is the ability to control the child. If we cannot control ourselves,

we cannot successfully control the child. We may rule him, but we shall not be controlling him in the highest sense of the word.

To attempt to rule a child by sheer domination regardless of our own self-control is entirely wrong. Our own temper must be kept under restraint, and very often indeed it requires more strength of will to do this than the actual strength of will required to control the child. When it is the matter of self-expression that is at stake we will find the child can enjoy making a noise and expressing movement boisterously, whilst we ourselves can be driven almost to distraction by the very same thing! It is then that discipline is needed. The natural tendency of the undisciplined and untrained person in authority is at once to terminate completely all noise on the child's part, in order to gain peace and quietness for herself. The right thing, however, is to divert immediately the disturbing form of expression on the child's part into more harmonious channels, at the same time avoiding any indication of impatience.

In addition to the natural impulses already mentioned, of climbing and of singing, dancing and miming, children nearly all exhibit an inherent love of playing with water, and also with fire.

Consider the fascination of water first. Of course, in seaside places the facilities for satisfying this urge are already provided, at any rate during fine weather. But in places where the child has not got these natural facilities, or again in long spells of bad weather, other means have to be found, and I have often turned the household bath

into a miniature paddling-pool, with slightly warm water, for short spells on wet afternoons, with a little boat to sail at the same time.

We all know how toddlers invariably love to walk through puddles in the street, and of course they have to be taught that this is not desirable. My own young son learnt before he was three years old that stepping into puddles, when out for a walk, was forbidden unless he had his Wellington boots on. If he had his Wellingtons on he would ask if he might walk in "just the licklest puggles," and he got an immense amount of satisfaction out of doing so. He quickly learnt the difference between complete frustration and reasonable compromise, although, of course, unable thus to describe it.

Passing on to the fascination which fire has for children, this is a matter which should be faced and realised, so that a wise way of dealing with it may be decided upon in the individual case concerned. The numbers of fatal cases of burning amongst children in this country in the average year is tragic proof of the fascination fire has for young children. Although a proportion of cases is due to other causes, I am afraid we are bound to admit that far too many accidents are undoubtedly due to children going too near the fire, or playing with matches.

Instead of telling the children that it is "naughty" to play with matches, I have found it more efficacious to impress upon them that the matches themselves are "naughty" and will hurt! To tell a young child that he is naughty will seldom deter him from repeating his efforts to play with the matches.

another time. A little child is apt to forget that a certain line of action on his part was called "naughty," if his desire to follow that line of action is very strong. But the idea that the matches themselves are "naughty" is interesting to him and will be retained in his memory for a longer period. In any case, it rests with us to realize the responsibility and never to slacken in our determination to see that matches are not left within reach of little hands, and better still, that they are not left within the range of vision of little people's eyes.

But as this instinct in children to play with fire frequently remains dangerously latent until it has had some sort of fulfilment, I think it is as well to provide some safe means of fulfilment as soon as the children have reached an age when simple comparisons can be pointed out and understood. We can then give them a small flash-lamp and teach them the difference between this light which will not hurt and the matches which *will*. I have often found this plan quite efficacious. When the child learns that the flash-lamp may be played with when asked for; although the matches may not, his subconscious mind becomes aware, in an undefined way, that complete thwarting of his desires is not our intention. Although he cannot define this idea, the effect is soothing to his previous feeling of frustration.

This might seem entirely problematical were it not based on actual experiences. I have carefully studied reactions to treatment and found that even young children in the nursery recognise (without being able to translate it into words) the difference

between complete frustration and judicious compromise. Wavering and promiscuous capitulations are fatal to discipline; children soon take advantage of them, but they will recognise the underlying authority when there is reasonable and judicious compromise.

CHAPTER XI

THE CAREFUL BLENDING OF CHARACTERISTICS

During the last century it was said by the late Lord Palmerston that "all children are born good," and much discussion has taken place from time to time as to the correctness or otherwise of this statement. Personally I consider that all children are born with certain undeveloped characteristics which, like the action of certain chemicals upon others, have to be correctly blended to produce good results, and it is according to how we guide this blending process that the children will (as we put it) "turn out."

"Joyce is completely spoilt," said a mother to me one day. "She hunches up her shoulders and scowls, and goes about looking so ill-tempered. She is resentful when I correct her, and is altogether different from what she used to be. I can't think what has come over her."

At first I wondered whether Joyce had grown jealous. She had been an only child for so long that I thought perhaps it was one of those many cases where the advent of a baby in the family had given her cause for jealousy. But no, her mother assured me that Joyce had never resented the new baby's arrival and was, in fact, devoted to him. I enquired whether Joyce was eating well and

sleeping well. "Yes," said her mother, "there is nothing unusual in these respects, except that she is perhaps rather more restless in bed these nights. It seems," she continued, "nothing in the world but a gradual change of disposition. She is spiteful and obstinate, and I am rather heart-broken about it because she used to be so sensible and so easy to manage."

I arranged for Joyce to come and have tea with me, and I got out some of my most intriguing treasures for her to play with—a little old-fashioned nest of lacquer boxes, all fitting inside one another, some puzzles, a treasured old doll of my childhood's days; and some beads to thread. And it was while Joyce was threading the beads that I noticed what was *really* different about the child. She couldn't manage to thread those beads without scowling.

I am not an oculist, but it didn't require an oculist to gather that little Miss Joyce was suffering from some sort of eye-strain, and this was putting a strain upon the poor child's whole nervous system. Hence her mysterious change from a sensible little person to what appeared to be a spiteful and obstinate one. The child did not know what was the matter with herself. She felt burdened and oppressed in a way she could not explain, and so she had become resentful towards an unidentified factor, and she directed this resentment towards those whom she vaguely felt were somehow failing her.

A visit with her mother to a qualified oculist soon put things on a right basis, and by means of correct spectacles the strain on her eyes was removed, her

whole system benefitted as a consequence, and Joyce was eventually restored to the same sensible and obliging little soul she had been when I first knew her.

It is quite conceivable that another child in exactly similar circumstances might react to those circumstances in an entirely different way. Joyce, you see, had felt burdened in some way which, to her, was indefinable. The burden was one of overstrained nerves directly brought about by the continual strain upon her eyes, but, notwithstanding the fact that she was having difficulty in seeing certain objects, she did not attribute that difficulty to her own eyesight. She vaguely felt that the objects themselves were difficult to see—the beads she was threading were, she thought, too small, books she tried to look at had, she thought, blurred pictures; and so on. It did not occur to her childish idea that the fault lay with her own eyes—it was the fault of the things she wanted to see! So she developed a grievance towards she knew not whom, felt ill-natured, and became perverse.

The reactions of a child named Audrey to exactly similar circumstances were entirely different, so analysing the characteristics of both these children will show where each of them had their respective excess of certain qualities and deficiency of others.

Audrey was about the same age as Joyce, eight years old, when through faulty eyesight she first began to feel herself burdened with some strain but, like Joyce, she did not attribute it to her own eyesight. Like Joyce, she found things were too indistinct for her to see properly and she felt, vaguely, that things were difficult to cope with. But

instead of her reaction to the oppressed feeling being one of sullen resentment towards other people, she clung more tenderly than usual to those around her, and seemed hungry for sympathy, although she was unable to specify what it was that troubled and burdened her and made her feel this need for sympathy. She became affectionately demonstrative to a greater extent than hitherto, whereas Joyce had become the reverse.

Now, we ask, why should two children of a similar age, in similar circumstances, react so differently?

Joyce we remember, was a child who had been sensible and easily managed prior to this eye trouble. But she became sullen and obstinate under a perpetual strain on her system. She showed resentment and became spiteful. Analysing the case, we find that she had a nature with a large proportion of reserve, and a strong sense of justice. These two characteristics are capable of producing reliability and fortitude, if there is also in the same nature a sufficiency of imagination, *rightly directed*. But in Joyce's case, her sense of justice was affronted by something she could not explain; and her imagination was, for the time being misdirected. These two factors, under the strain she was suffering, produced obstinacy, resentment, and spite. When her sense of justice was diverted back into the right channel, by the removal of the grievance, the child's disposition was readjusted. It is my opinion that in Joyce's case the re-adjustment was not only because the eye-strain was removed. That was a necessary step to take. But such characteristics as Joyce possessed were capable of producing

real fortitude, if her sense of justice had remained unassailed, and if her imagination had not proceeded in the wrong direction. But the eye-strain was of course, the beginning of the whole disturbance and it was fortunate indeed that the trouble was alleviated by correctly prescribed glasses.

In Audrey's case, on the other hand, there was a large proportion of self-pity in her nature. Fortunately it was blended with extensive affection towards other people, which saved the child from being selfish, although self-pitying. Note that I say "extensive" affection, rather than "intensive," as Audrey's type of affection was more widespread than deep. When she was assailed by the indefinable (to her) burden and strain, her self-pity made her long for and seek sympathy, and this was coupled with a feeling of affection towards those who satisfied this longing.

By comparing the reactions of these two little girls to the same circumstances it should be made apparent that it is useless to say to any child, on a superficial judging of behaviour, "Don't be silly—look at So-and-So; she had just the same thing to put up with as you have, but she didn't behave like you are doing about it."

Very often this is not at all fair to the child, and is likely to arouse a great deal of resentment towards the other child for being *able* to behave better under the same circumstances. In any case we are certainly not helping her by blaming her failure to behave as well as the other child. It is our duty to find out the reason for the difference in the two children's reactions to the same circumstances, and

it is our duty also to ascertain in what way we can assist the child to readjust her attitude.

We must also, of course, be watchful and avoid, as far as it is in our power to do so, such circumstances as I have described arising through insufficient attention to any item of the child's personal hygiene

It is more generally acknowledged now than it used to be a few years ago that in the building-up of children's health we are assisting in the development of their best natures. By this I do not, of course, mean that a delicate or unhealthy child cannot have a nice nature! On the contrary, I have seen many brave little souls with real nobility of character, with the sweetest of dispositions, struggling through the handicap of ill-health. But what I do mean is that we should (and I think nowadays we do) attach enormous importance to the details of hygiene, in order to help our children to avoid the handicap of ill-health, or to overcome it if it already exists, and should we fail to attend to these matters we should be to blame if the children were difficult to manage and naughty.

I am sometimes rather surprised that whilst "Kep Fit" classes are rightly given much prominence nowadays, yet at the same time infection and quarantine in the matter of such ordinary things as heavy colds and coughs are given such correspondingly little prominence.

Colds are occasionally the forerunners of quite serious illnesses, and in any case repeated colds have a weakening effect on the general health. We cannot expect a child who is continually the victim of catarrhal weaknesses to live up to the best

of his capabilities, so we really should guard against the infection of colds

There are certain little precautionary measures we can take. Nose-drill is important, and the child finds it fun if we make a game of it. Children I have known have often at bed time sought to escape the nightly nose-blowing, but I have got them to gaily do it whilst I have chanted—

“I must now say ‘good night’ to good Mrs. Nose,
To open her door I must give it two blows,
A nice gentle blow for each nostril, that’s right,
To my nose and her nostrils I now say ‘good night’.”

It is surprising how small children take an interest in these little ceremonies if they are turned into games instead of stern duty! Later they learn to realise the importance of it themselves, without resorting to play.

Gentle nose-drill is important all through life and children must not be allowed to neglect it. At the same time, it is equally important to see that it is done gently, to avoid any injury to membranes.

Throats should be kept healthy by rinsing or gargling, and this can become an automatic habit to follow the nightly cleaning of teeth, which should, of course, be brushed in the mornings as well, and after meals if possible.

The nursery way to keep a toddler from finding this part of his routine irksome can consist of a game of make-believe. He can pretend that every one of his teeth are little white ponies and we can make the sound of galloping hoofs with our tongue. The little ponies are waiting in their stables to be fed

with tooth-paste, and to have a little water too. The brush can be supposed to be the man who takes the paste to them, and the child has to show him the way. This creates a feeling of responsibility which appeals to a child, and on occasions when he wants to shirk it, if we tell him that the little white ponies are unhappy because the naughty tooth-paste man hasn't attended to them he will generally assume an air of great importance, and then proceed to get the tooth-brush and clean his teeth.

Stern-minded people may say that these little games are spoiling the child, but there I do not agree. I am not at all in favour of spoiling children, but let us compare the characteristics we shall evoke by playful methods with those we should arouse by the "Do as I say at once, and no nonsense" method —

By adopting a game to induce the child to do what we wish, against his former inclinations, we are preventing him from becoming conscious of a clash of wills. Therefore we are keeping in subjection any feeling of defiance on his part. We are arousing a playfully happy mood in the child, and at the same time we are attaining our own object regarding the things we wish him to do. Finally—and what is very important—the child has shared a feeling of fellowship with us, a co-operation, brought about by mutually enjoying a game. All this seems to disprove the idea that such methods are "spoiling the child."

If by this playful plan we fail to achieve our object, then it may be we shall have to resort to sterner ways. But what characteristics are we likely to evoke by adopting the attitude of "Do as I say

and no nonsense about it"? Probably we shall arouse resentment, even although (according to the child's fear of us, or his fear of our next move) his resentment may be inward, and not outwardly demonstrated to any great extent. His will may be outwardly resigned to ours, and so we may achieve our material object. But the resentment he has felt is likely to recur every time an exactly similar situation arises for some time to come. It may, in fact, develop into a matter of stubbornness with him.

It does, therefore, seem that if we can succeed in overcoming little contrary ways in children by playful methods it is much more to the good than by going into battle with them. It creates more happiness to have them as allies than as opponents.

CHAPTER XII

TALKING TO THE TINIES ABOUT THINGS SPIRITUAL

BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING TWO TEXTS FROM
THE BIBLE

(*NOT* to be quoted to the little ones.)

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul ” Genesis ii, verse 7.

“ . . Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.” 1 John iii, verse 24.

When my son, Roger, was between two and three years old his father and I taught him to say his little prayers every night . Putting the palms of his chubby hands together, finger-tips pointing upwards and eyes screwed up tightly, he asked God to take care of us all through the night, and thanked Him for all He had done for us during the day, repeating the words after us.

“But who *IS* God?” asked Roger.

Well, there are little buttercups and daisies in the grass, I told the small boy—lovely little bright yellow buttercups, and dear little daisies, with tiny yellow cushiony centres which have heaps and

heaps of white petals all round them, and some of them have lovely little pink tips to their petals. It was God who made those little buttercups and daisies. There is not one man or woman or child in the whole of this great big world who could make those flowers, but God can. Men can make motor-cars, aeroplanes, and puffa-trains; men can build houses and make toys, but they cannot make real flowers. They can put seeds in the ground and water them, and then the seeds will grow into flowers, but it is God who *makes* them grow into flowers, and men cannot make the seeds. Men can get the seeds from other flowers, but they cannot make them. And only God can make the flowers.

Mummy can make a pudding; she can put some barley and some sugar into some milk in a pie-dish and put it in the oven, and soon it will be a pudding, and then we can say Mummy made it. But Mummy cannot make the barley or the sugar, and if God didn't cause these things to grow she could not make the pudding.

God is our Heavenly Father. Daddy is your earthly father, and Daddy loves you and helps to look after you. He is not the father in other people's families, but just the father in our own little family. But God is your Heavenly Father, and He is the Heavenly Father of everybody else who wants Him as well. And He is the Heavenly Father of the little birds and flowers too. And He sends rain and sometimes lovely warm sunshine to make them grow, and to make you a strong child. And He sends the winter after the summer, so that most of the flowers can have a nice rest, ready to come again the next summer. And He sends night-

time after day-time, so that you, and all of us, can have a rest before the next day comes.

When you were a tiny baby in Heaven, before the Heavenly Father gave you to Daddy and Mummy, He breathed into your little body, and what do you think happened? God's breath made a little living soul in your body. Nobody here will ever see that little soul, but as you grow into a big child, and then into a big grown-up person, that little soul which God breathed into you will grow too. It is the part of you which makes you want to be good and kind and jolly, and to think nice things, and be brave, and tell the truth. It is yours, because God gave it to you, and yet it is also God's because it is part of His breath and Spirit.

A Spirit is the part of people which makes them feel whether they want to be good or naughty, and God's Spirit makes Him always good and kind, and never anything else but good and kind and wonderful. So when He breathed a little of it into you, just before you reached Daddy and Mummy, He gave you a little of His good, kind Spirit for yourself, and it made your little soul.

Sometimes when you want to be a little bit naughty you will find something inside you makes you think you won't be naughty after all, and that is God's Spirit in you telling your little soul to try and be good.

Every time that you try, and TRY, and T R Y not to be naughty your little soul grows more and more beautiful and happy, so that if you go on trying all the time you will have such a strong soul when you are a big grown-up person that it will make your face shine with the light of God's Spirit,

and that will make the people round you happy too.

But it will not always be easy. Sometimes you will forget to try, and sometimes you will just not care, and then the little soul inside you will grow weaker, just like a little plant in a pot which everyone has forgotten to water. And the longer you forget all about it, or don't care, the worse it gets.

All this is a big secret between the wonderful God in Heaven and yourself, and when you say your prayers by your bedside you must thank Him for this great big secret and ask Him to help you to remember all about it at the right times, so that you will know when His Spirit is telling you to be brave and good as you grow into a big child. And God will always be your kind Heavenly Father, and He will watch over you and be near to you to help you when anything is difficult for you.

So now, never forget this lovely secret—remember that it is a secret and not something we talk about to other people. But when you see the little buttercups and daisies in the grass you will know that they were made by the same Heavenly Father who made your little soul.

CHAPTER XIII

A FEW GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

THE QUESTION OF MARKS

A modern tendency is to question whether it is a good thing to give children marks for their work. Personally I am sufficiently old-fashioned in this respect to think it is, inasmuch as it provides them with a means whereby they can assess their own progress. An attractive way of giving them, however, is desirable with young children, instead of the usual unimaginative system of marking their little exercises, etc., with numbers or letters, signifying the degree of success their efforts have reached.

At one private school I visited, I found the children were enthusiastic about the manner in which their marks were given. The teachers each had three papier-maché bowls, in one of which they kept a stock of large cockle-shells; in another, flat, round counters in all colours, similar to those used for the game of "Ludo"; and in the third, cowry shells. When a child was awarded ten marks, he or she, received a large cockle-shell; for five marks he received a coloured counter; for one mark he received a cowry shell, the latter being awarded for correct verbal answers, and to make up odd amounts, such as four out of five, seven out of ten,

etc. These marks were all given out as the lessons proceeded, and at the end of the session each child took his collection to his teacher to be counted, entered into the mark-books and returned to the respective bowls ready for the next session.

The children took a keen interest in this method and could keep asking, during the day, for "a counter for five cowries, please," or "a cockle shell for two counters, please," as they got more marks. They were delighted to turn their marks into as many cockle shells as they could and watch their collection growing.

Disobedience, or any fault needing punitive correction, was adjusted by the teacher telling the child concerned to "pass up one mark"—or five, or ten, as the case merited. This was felt considerably more than if the marks were taken off in a book only, as the child found himself deprived of something tangible. At the same time he knew that he had an opportunity of earning marks again and perhaps making up for those he had lost, if he tried particularly hard.

WHEN TODDLERS REFUSE FOOD

The toddler who goes through a phase of refusing food often causes great concern to those in charge of him. Actually it is not wise to let him see our anxiety if this phase arises, and a little self-imposed fasting will probably not do any harm, if it does not occur often or last too long. However, when it is time really to take the matter in hand, a little game of "posting letters" often humours the toddlers into eating. I have found it efficacious to

sit at the table with exactly similar food to his own and say, "I am going to post a letter to Little Jack Horner—look ! Here is my letter-box," pointing to my mouth and putting some food into it. I then say, "Who are *you* going to post a letter to, in your own letter-box?" If he does not enter into the game and follow my example, I say, "Mary, Mary, quite contrary wants me to post a letter to her now, so here it is going into my letter-box for her, look !" and I take some more food, point to my lips, and put it into my mouth. The child will generally begin to react favourably after a while, and we then take it in turns to "post letters" to different nursery characters. He forgets that he did not want to eat before.

ON CHOOSING BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Books to read aloud to the little ones should be chosen with due regard to the fact that if bed-time is the reading time there must be no element of excitement in the stories. The majority of children ask "Why?" about so many things that bed-time books must also be free from subjects which will give rise to much questioning on their part, as active little brains are so easily stimulated, with adverse effect on sleep. A pretty story, told in simple words, in rhythmical sentences, has a soothing influence the last thing before "good nights" are said.

When children are a little older it must be remembered that they are very prone to imagine themselves in the rôle of the chief personalities of the book they are reading, or the book which is

being read to them. This is often carried to greater extremes than many grown-up people realise. Books for the older nursery folk, and for juniors in general, should be peopled with healthy characters; over-emphasis should be avoided, but the fact that the children characterised in story books wield a strong influence on the children who follow their exploits should not be lost sight of when making a choice of reading matter. Stories about animals are also good for this reason, and imbue the little people with a love for and understanding of the animal world.

TYING PARCELS, BACKING BOOKS

Little children nearly always love to "make a parcel," but it is surprising how seldom grown-ups try to teach toddlers to fasten parcels up properly in paper and string. I have often found quite big children unable to do a parcel up tidily. Some time ago I was in a fashionable departmental store when a very nice, refined type of young fellow of about seventeen years of age served me. When it came to the business of wrapping up my purchase he was quite unable to do so, and after making two ineffectual attempts, he was noticed by an older assistant, who appeared to have some authority, and who told the youth *he should have learnt how to make proper parcels before he took the job*. It transpired this was his first day in business. The incident strengthened my already formed opinion that one cannot teach children too soon how to do simple things, and the making of parcels should be taught and practised in the early days, so that it

can be done neatly and expertly when required later on.

Putting a paper cover on a book to preserve the back is another useful thing to teach, and provides the children with occupation they enjoy. A wet afternoon can be spent making paper covers and putting them on, and if some oddments of fancy paper, such as wall-paper, can be found to do this with it will add very much to the child's pleasure and sense of achievement, as well as teaching the valuable lesson that books are precious possessions to be treated with care !

A WET DAY AMUSEMENT

A wet day amusement, which often gives pleasure when other activities pall, is provided by letting the children cut out some pictures from magazines, advertisements, etc., and giving each child a large safety-pin which you have straightened out (a safety-pin is safer for them to handle than an ordinary pin). Each picture, as soon as it has been cut out can be pasted on to a plain post-card, or on to a stiff piece of drawing paper, leaving it to dry whilst the next is being cut out. When they are dry the safety-pin can be used to prick out parts of the pictures, such as, for instance, beads round a girl or lady's neck; flowers in a garden or on a tree, etc. When held up to the light these give the children pleasure by sparkling. Particularly effective are windows pricked out in the picture of a house or cottage, as then the children hold the card up to the light and see the house illuminated from within. A picture in which the sky is shown

provides material for pricking out imaginary stars, and another favourite illustration is a Christmas tree, on which can be pricked out "sparkling decorations." Candles, lamps, etc., are other suitable subjects for this treatment. You will find that the children will soon be making all sorts of suggestions enlarging upon the possibilities this amusement gives.

AT THE CHILDREN'S PARTY

A novel way of distributing small gifts to children at a party, and at the same time providing them with an exciting game to pass away a very happy half-hour or so, is to improvise an indoor "fishing-pond" which needs NO WATER !

Prepare beforehand a sufficient number of gifts for there to be one for each child, and also some additional novelties, such as little farm-house animals, magnets, etc., wrap up each of the gifts in paper, using brown paper for those for the boys, and white paper for those for the girls. Wrapping paper can be bought for a few coppers at the stationer's shops, if it does not happen that you have some in the house, left over from your shopping expeditions.

Tie each parcel securely with string, leaving a large loop at the side or top. The little farm-house animals, magnets, or other novelties, need not be wrapped in paper, but each must be tied with a piece of string, leaving a loop in a prominent position

Improvise fishing-rods, one for each child, by tying long pieces of string to sticks, such as short

bamboo gardening canes, and tying a sufficiently strong wire hook to the end of each string.

Place all the parcels and little novelties in a tumbled-up heap in the centre of the room, and then bring a sufficient number of chairs for there to be one for each child, plain dining-room, bedroom and kitchen chairs being the best for the purpose. Place them so as to form a complete circle around the parcels, the backs of the chairs being towards the centre, which now becomes the "fishing pond," and the seats of the chairs forming the outer circle.

When the children are assembled, let each one kneel on a chair, with faces towards the "pond," and then give them their fishing rods. Explain to them that they must each fish up one parcel, the girls a white one and the boys a brown one. If you have placed your chairs sufficiently far from the heap of parcels to make it just a little difficult they will enjoy this all the more, but only kneeling must be allowed, and no standing on the chairs, which would then be liable to overbalance. Another precaution you must take is to insist that each child keeps his (or her) fishing line immediately in front of him, and lowered into the "pond," until a parcel has been secured, when a grown-up will take charge of the rod and tackle, so that there will be no risk of hooks doing damage to children's faces, hair, etc.

When each child has got one parcel, the game can be resumed by allowing further fishing for the little novelties.

With very young children, fishing-nets can be substituted for lines and hooks, the nets being easier

to manipulate, and eliminating all risk of casualties from careless handling of hooks.

HOTEL VISITS WITH THE TODDLER

Hotel visits with an active and enterprising toddler are sometimes a little awkward, as naturally a very young child with an enquiring mind finds much that is novel in the Hotel, which is consequently rather likely to lead him into mischief, to the embarrassment of those in charge of him.

In the majority of Hotels hot and cold water taps are installed in every bedroom, and if a child has not been accustomed to these in his nursery at home their novelty to him proves to be a great temptation, which can be a serious danger if the hot water supply is at scalding point. How toddlers love to scramble up on to the pipes and reach the taps, and what a lovely mess they can make with splashing! Apart from the risks of scalds already referred to, there is the nuisance of little frocks and suits getting wet through, and nearby walls and furniture being splashed. I find it a good plan, therefore, to take on my travels a collapsible three-sided clothes-maiden, with covers made to fit over the three sides. The maiden itself folds flat, and each of the three sides is also jointed to fold over, so that it occupies only a small space on journeys. Unfolded and fitted with the slips, it forms an adequate screen around the wash-basin in the bedroom, thus putting the taps out of reach of little people's busy fingers when the basin is not officially in use. I can fancy people saying, "But a toddler could soon remove the screen!" My answer to that is, the fact of the basin and taps being out of

sight removes the persistent reminder of their tantalising proximity, and obedience on the point of not touching the screen is much easier to enforce than obedience in the matter of the taps, the very sight of which is so tempting !

With regard to making the covers, these are very simply made, although in these difficult days for materials it is as well to utilise remnants for the purpose if possible, or buy some of the old black-out material, which can now be got at some shops, and make it gay by running some coloured gimp along the edges. Whatever material you choose must be made in three straight panels, each being twice the height of the clothes-maiden, so that it can be doubled over at the top to come down each side of one of the three divisions, and tied at the bottom with ribbon or tape which you have sewn at the corners.

Without the covers on, this jointed and folding clothes-maiden is a useful acquisition in the Hotel bedroom, for hanging little garments on to air. At night-time, when the toddler is asleep, it can be used with the covers on as a screen around the head of the cot or little bed. On colder nights this is particularly advantageous, as of course Hotel bedrooms cannot always be arranged and planned with quite the same regard to individual requirements as the night nursery at home.

Bells are another source of difficulty with the toddler in Hotels. When he had just learnt to stagger around unaided, my little one delighted in pressing every bell he could find, and the results during visits were sometimes very embarrassing. He would press a bell and then chuckle with delight, until

I hit upon the idea of buying a two-way switch from an electrician's shop and saying to the child, "This is your bell now—you push this one, but you must not push any other bells." He then took to carrying the two-way switch about with him, and it successfully diverted him from the bells.

At meal times it is as well to have the child's chair placed in a position well out of the way of waiters or waitresses, who have to go to and fro' with hot dishes. This will avoid all danger of hot soup, hot tea, etc., being inadvertently spilt on the child—a danger against which to guard, where little children are concerned. Always arrange, therefore, to have the toddler's chair in a position entirely out of the direct line of service, so that there is no possibility of such an accident occurring.

-TEACHING THE TODDLERS TO CARE FOR PETS

It is exceptional for children not to be anxious to own "something alive," and it is a great pity when circumstances prevent the fulfilment of this wish. To own a pet, or to share ownership of one, usually brings out some very desirable characteristics in a child, if proper guidance in the care of the animal or bird is given.

I am not in agreement with the view very commonly held that it is a good thing to bring up a baby and a puppy together. I think that a dog is one of the best pets to give to a toddler, but I consider it desirable that it should have got past its puppy complaints, and also be thoroughly house-trained before it is a suitable companion for the child. A young dog, past the teething stage, with

the risk of accompanying disturbances such as worms, distemper, etc., seems to me far more suitable for the child than the attractive, lovable, but unruly little puppy, liable to develop distressing ailments, and not house-trained. It is a real grief to a child if his little pet develops a complaint from which it happens to die, and the risk of this is greater with a puppy than with a dog which is past its teething troubles, so I think we should choose the latter for the child's sake. Apart from the emotional aspect, I definitely think it is healthier for the child to have the young, house-trained dog than the puppy.

Having given the child ownership, or part-ownership of a dog, you will then want to guide him in the care of his pet and, of course, the first essential he must realise is the animal's need of kindness. The toddler will usually be proud of treating his dog kindly in his own little way, so all that should be necessary in this respect is for you to show him how to handle the dog, and how to give it food and water, emphasising the need to keep special dishes for it, and to keep them clean. The dog's bed must also be known to the toddler, but keeping it clean is, of course, a matter for the older people to undertake, as also is the grooming of the dog.

Taking the dog for the daily walks with whoever is in charge of the small owner will afford him a great deal of pleasure, and all the little duties relegated to him on behalf of his pet will give him a happy feeling of pride and responsibility, mingled with a protective sense towards the animal.

The care of a cat or kitten entails a little less work than that of a dog, but if the former is the pet provided for the toddler, the same remarks apply regarding guidance in handling the animal kindly, and seeing to its own special dishes.

Should it be a bird he has for a pet, then he can be taught to see that it has fresh water in its drinking dish every day, and fresh seed in the seed container. Although the daily cleaning of the sand-tray is not work to be entrusted to a young child, he could be allowed to wash one of the perches every day and put it in the sunshine, or some other warm place to dry. This little duty, and seeing to the water and seed every day, will give him a realisation of Dickie's need and dependence upon him. Although by those who have never owned a canary it is often thought to be a not very personal pet, it will be found that a bird of this description becomes very affectionate towards owners who talk to it a good deal, so the child should be taught to speak gently and often to his little feathered pet, when it will learn to chirp back to him, and even to take notice of certain special phrases after a while. It is only the bird who is seldom or never spoken to which remains impersonal in its ways and leads a lonely, isolated little life of its own.

THE INTERRUPTING CHILD AND THE WIRELESS

Many of the present-day children (and a few of the grown-ups also !) are very apt to interrupt when others are speaking, which is, of course, not only annoying but very ill-mannered too. I have met children who talk so rapidly that it can be described

as "gabbling." When visiting their families I have realised that what has led to this hurried way of speaking has been the family failing of interrupting, so that among the children a nervous habit has developed of rushing through what they want to say as quickly as possible, in case others should cut their observations short with conversations of their own.

This prevalence of interrupting seems to have arisen partly through the practice of sitting with the Wireless on, and talking when a conversation is being broadcast over the Radio. The total disregard of another person's voice is naturally noticed by the tinies, even if only sub-consciously, and until they have reached years of discretion they cannot discriminate between the lesser or greater discourtesy of interrupting a speaker on the Wireless and a speaker who is present in person. If, then, they find grown-ups talking with total disregard of a voice which is being broadcast they are likely to do the same themselves, not only when the voice is coming over the Radio, but also when the voice is that of someone actually present.

It seems obvious, therefore, when there is someone talking over the air, that it is better to either keep silent or turn the Wireless off, so that the practice of interrupting when others are speaking will be discouraged.

This habit of interrupting is very difficult to eradicate when it is of long standing, so it is better to check it in its early stages, always turning subsequently to the child, when the right moment has come for him to speak, and asking him sympathetically to tell you what it was he wanted to say. When he begins to find from experience that he will always

be listened to if he waits until other people have finished speaking, he will learn to wait patiently and he will lose any fear he may have had of not being heard at all. After all, a little child's utterances may seem trivial to us, but very often they are of great importance for the moment to the child. I was touched one time by the reply of a three-year-old boy when his mother said to him, "I've no time to listen to what you've got to say—you're nobody!" Rather wistfully he replied, "Aren't I even *half* a person?" So, whilst restraining children from interrupting and from too much self-assertion, we should nevertheless give them confidence that they will be sympathetically heard at the right time.